WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

LENIN

COLLECTED WORKS

5

THE RUSSIAN EDITION WAS PRINTED
IN ACCORDANCE WITH A DECISION
OF THE NINTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)
AND THE SECOND CONGRESS OF SOVIETS
OF THE U.S.S.R.

ИНСТИТУТ МАРКСИЗМА—ЛЕНИНИЗМА при ЦК КНСС

В. И. ЛЕНИН

СОЧИНЕНИЯ

Издание четвертое

ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО
ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ
МОСКВА

V. I. LENIN

COLLECTED WORKS

VOLUME 5

May 1901 – February 1902

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
MOSCOW

TRANSLATED BY THE LATE JOE FINEBERG
AND GEORGE HANNA

EDITED BY VICTOR JEROME

From Marx to Mao

© Digital Reprints
2009
www.marx2mao.com

First printing 1960
Second printing 1964
Third printing 1972
Fourth printing 1975
Fifth printing 1977

Л $\frac{10102-671}{014(01)-77}$ без объявл.

CONTENTS

Preface 11

1901

WHERE TO BEGIN 13

ANOTHER MASSACRE 25

THE PERSECUTORS OF THE ZEMSTVO AND THE HANNIBALS OF LIBERALISM 31

I 36
II 43
III 48
IV 55
V 62
VI 72

A VALUABLE ADMISSION 81

THE LESSONS OF THE CRISIS 89

THE SERF-OWNERS AT WORK 95

A ZEMSTVO CONGRESS 101

THE AGRARIAN QUESTION AND THE "CRITICS OF MARX" 103

I The "Law" of Diminishing Returns 107
II The Theory of Rent 119
III Machinery in Agriculture 130
IV The Abolition of the Antithesis Between Town and Country. Particular Questions Raised by the "Critics" 146
V "The Prosperity of Advanced, Modern Small Farms". The Baden Example 159

VI The Productivity of a Small and a Big Farm. An Example from East Prussia 167

VII The Inquiry into Peasant Farming in Baden. 182

VIII General Statistics of German Agriculture for 1882 and 1895. The Question of the Medium Farms . . . 194

IX Dairy Farming and Agricultural Co-operative Societies in Germany. The Agricultural Population in Germany Divided According to Its Position in the Economy 205

THE "UNITY" CONFERENCE OF R.S.D L.P. ORGANISATIONS ABROAD, September 21-22 (October 4-5), 1901 223

1. SPEECH DELIVERED ON SEPTEMBER 21 (OCTOBER 4). (*Note from the Minutes*) 225

2. QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE UNION OF RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS ABROAD AT THE "UNITY" CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER 21 (OCTOBER 4), 1901 230

FIGHTING THE FAMINE-STRICKEN 231

REPLY TO THE ST. PETERSBURG COMMITTEE 239

PARTY AFFAIRS ABROAD. 241

PENAL SERVITUDE REGULATIONS AND PENAL SERVITUDE SENTENCES 243

REVIEW OF HOME AFFAIRS 251

I Famine 253

II Attitude Towards the Crisis and the Famine 274

III The Third Element 281

IV Two Speeches by Marshals of the Nobility 289

PREFACE TO THE PAMPHLET *DOCUMENTS OF THE "UNITY" CONFERENCE* 302

THE PROTEST OF THE FINNISH PEOPLE 306

THE JOURNAL *SVOBODA* 311

A TALK WITH DEFENDERS OF ECONOMISM 313

ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY OF G. V. PLEKHANOV 321

DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BEGUN 322

ON A LETTER FROM SOUTHERN WORKERS 326

ANARCHISM AND SOCIALISM 327

1902

CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET 331

POLITICAL AGITATION AND "THE CLASS POINT OF VIEW" 337

REPLY TO "A READER" 344

WHAT IS TO BE DONE? *Burning Questions of Our Movement* . . . 347

Preface 349

I Dogmatism and "Freedom of Criticism" 352

A. What Does "Freedom of Criticism" Mean? 352

B. The New Advocates of "Freedom of Criticism" . . . 356

C. Criticism in Russia 361

D. Engels on the Importance of the Theoretical Struggle 368

II The Spontaneity of the Masses and the Consciousness of the Social-Democrats 373

A. The Beginning of the Spontaneous Upsurge 374

B. Bowing to Spontaneity. *Rabochaya Mysl* 378

C. The Self-Emancipation Group and *Rabocheye Dyelo* 387

III Trade-Unionist Politics and Social-Democratic Politics 397

A. Political Agitation and Its Restriction by the Economists 398

B. How Martynov Rendered Plekhanov More Profound 408

C. Political Exposures and "Training in Revolutionary Activity" 412

D. What Is There in Common Between Economism and Terrorism? 417

E. The Working Class as Vanguard Fighter for Democracy 421

F. Once More "Slanderers", Once More "Mystifiers" . . . 436

IV The Primitiveness of the Economists and the Organisation of the Revolutionaries 440

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

A. What Is Primitiveness? 441
B. Primitiveness and Economism 444
C. Organisation of Workers and Organisation of Revolutionaries 451
D. The Scope of Organisational Work 467
E. "Conspirational" Organisation and "Democratism" 473
F. Local and All-Russian Work 482
V The "Plan" for an All-Russian Political Newspaper 492
A. Who Was Offended by the Article "Where To Begin" 493
B. Can a Newspaper Be a Collective Organiser? 498
C. What type of Organisation Do We Require? 510
Conclusion 517
Appendix. The Attempt to Unite *Iskra* with *Rabocheye Dyelo* 521
Correction to *What Is To Be Done?* 528
Notes 531
The Life and Work of V. I. Lenin. Chronology 569

ILLUSTRATIONS

First page of *Iskra*, No. 4, carrying Lenin's article "Where To Begin". 1901 15

Facsimile of the cover of the magazine *Zarya*, No. 2-3 1901; which published the following of Lenin's writings: "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", the first four chapters of "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" (under the heading "'Critics' on the Agrarian Question"), and "Review of Home Affairs" 33

Facsimile of the title page of the magazine *Obrasovaniye*, No. 2, for 1906 which carried chapters V-IX of Lenin's "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" 105

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "The Journal *Svoboda*". 1901 312-313

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Anarchism and Socialism". 1901 329

Cover of Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* 1902 348-49

PREFACE

Volume Five contains Lenin's works written between May 1901 and February 1902. These include articles and notes published in *Iskra*: "Where To Begin", "Another Massacre", "A Valuable Admission", "The Lessons of the Crisis", "The Serf-Owners at Work", "Fighting the Famine-Stricken", "Party Affairs Abroad", "A Talk with Defenders of Economism", "Demonstrations Have Begun", "Political Agitation and 'The Class Point of View'", and others. In these articles Lenin deals with the most important events in Russian domestic affairs and throws light on the concrete tasks of building the Party and of the class struggle of the proletariat.

In the article "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", published in *Zarya* in December 1901, Lenin elaborates the tactics of the Marxist party of the proletariat in relation to the liberal bourgeoisie.

"The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" expounds and develops the Marxist theory of the agrarian question and is a critique of the Russian and international revisionists.

This volume also contains Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* the theoretical premises of which laid the foundations of the ideology of the Bolshevik Party.

Seven of the works of Lenin to be found in this volume are included in the *Collected Works* for the first time. Of these, three are notes published in *Iskra*: "A Zemstvo Congress", "On a Letter from 'Southern Workers'", and "Reply to 'A Reader'". The other four documents are: "Speech Delivered on September 21 (October 4, new style)" [Lenin's

speech at the "Unity" Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. organisations abroad on September 21 (October 4), 1901], "The Journal *Svoboda*", "On the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Revolutionary Activity of G. V. Plekhanov", and "Anarchism and Socialism". These four items appeared in print only after the October Revolution.

WHERE TO BEGIN[1]

Written in May 1901
Published in *Iskra,*
No. 4, May 1901

Published according to
the *Iskra* text

РОССІЙСКАЯ СОЦІАЛЬ-ДЕМОКРАТИЧЕСКАЯ РАБОЧАЯ ПАРТІЯ

ИСКРА

«Изъ искры возгорится пламя»... Отответъ декабристовъ Пушкину

№ 4. МАЙ 1901 ГОДА № 4.

СЪ ЧЕГО НАЧАТЬ?

САМОДЕРЖАВІЕ И ФИНАНСЫ

First page of Intv. No. 4, covering Lasley's article "Where To Begin?, 1926
Retired

In recent years the question of "what is to be done" has confronted Russian Social-Democrats with particular insistence. It is not a question of what path we must choose (as was the case in the late eighties and early nineties), but of what practical steps we must take upon the known path and how they shall be taken. It is a question of a system and plan of practical work. And it must be admitted that we have not yet solved this question of the character and the methods of struggle, fundamental for a party of practical activity, that it still gives rise to serious differences of opinion which reveal a deplorable ideological instability and vacillation. On the one hand, the "Economist" trend, far from being dead, is endeavouring to clip and narrow the work of political organisation and agitation. On the other, unprincipled eclecticism is again rearing its head, aping every new "trend", and is incapable of distinguishing immediate demands from the main tasks and permanent needs of the movement as a whole. This trend, as we know, has ensconced itself in *Rabocheye Dyelo*.[2] This journal's latest statement of "programme", a bombastic article under the bombastic title "A Historic Turn" ("*Listok*" *Rabochevo Dyela*, No. 6[3]), bears out with special emphasis the characterisation we have given. Only yesterday there was a flirtation with "Economism", a fury over the resolute condemnation of *Rabochaya Mysl*,[4] and Plekhanov's presentation of the question of the struggle against autocracy was being toned down. But today Liebknecht's words are being quoted: "If the circumstances change within twenty-four hours, then tactics must be changed within twenty-four hours." There is talk of a "strong fighting organisation" for direct attack, for storming the autocracy; of "broad revolutionary political agitation among the masses" (how energetic we are now—both revolutionary and

political!); of "ceaseless calls for street protest,"; of "street demonstrations of a pronounced [*sic*!] political character"; and so on, and so forth.

We might perhaps declare ourselves happy at *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s quick grasp of the programme we put forward in the first issue of *Iskra*,[5] calling for the formation of a strong well-organised party, whose aim is not only to win isolated concessions but to storm the fortress of the autocracy itself; but the lack of any set point of view in these individuals can only dampen our happiness.

Rabocheye Dyelo, of course, mentions Liebknecht's name in vain. The tactics of agitation in relation to some special question, or the tactics with regard to some detail of party organisation may be changed in twenty-four hours; but only people devoid of all principle are capable of changing, in twenty-four hours, or, for that matter, in twenty-four months, their view on the necessity—in general, constantly, and absolutely—of an organisation of struggle and of political agitation among the masses. It is ridiculous to plead different circumstances and a change of periods: the building of a fighting organisation and the conduct of political agitation are essential under any "drab, peaceful" circumstances, in any period, no matter how marked by a "declining revolutionary spirit"; moreover, it is precisely in such periods and under such circumstances that work of this kind is particularly necessary, since it is too late to form the organisation in times of explosion and outbursts; the party must be in a state of readiness to launch activity at a moment's notice. "Change the tactics within twenty-four hours"! But in order to change tactics it is first necessary to have tactics; without a strong organisation skilled in waging political struggle under all circumstances and at all times, there can be no question of that systematic plan of action, illumined by firm principles and steadfastly carried out, which alone is worthy of the name of tactics. Let us, indeed, consider the matter; we are now being told that the "historic moment" has presented our Party with a "completely new" question—the question of terror. Yesterday the "completely new" question was political organisation and agitation; today it is terror. Is it not strange to hear people who have so grossly forgotten their principles holding forth on a radical change in tactics?

Fortunately, *Rabocheye Dyelo* is in error. The question of terror is not a new question at all; it will suffice to recall briefly the established views of Russian Social-Democracy on the subject.

In principle we have never rejected, and cannot reject, terror. Terror is one of the forms of military action that may be perfectly suitable and even essential at a definite juncture in the battle, given a definite state of the troops and the existence of definite conditions. But the important point is that terror, at the present time, is by no means suggested as an operation for the army in the field, an operation closely connected with and integrated into the entire system of struggle, but as an independent form of occasional attack unrelated to any army. Without a central body and with the weakness of local revolutionary organisations, this, in fact, is all that terror can be. We, therefore, declare emphatically that under the present conditions such a means of struggle is inopportune and unsuitable; that it diverts the most active fighters from their real task, the task which is most important from the standpoint of the interests of the movement as a whole; and that it disorganises the forces, not of the government, but of the revolution. We need but recall the recent events. With our own eyes we saw that the mass of workers and "common people" of the towns pressed forward in struggle, while the revolutionaries lacked a staff of leaders and organisers. Under such conditions, is there not the danger that, as the most energetic revolutionaries go over to terror, the fighting contingents, in whom alone it is possible to place serious reliance, will be weakened? Is there not the danger of rupturing the contact between the revolutionary organisations and the disunited masses of the discontented, the protesting, and the disposed to struggle, who are weak precisely because they are disunited? Yet it is this contact that is the sole guarantee of our success. Far be it from us to deny the significance of heroic individual blows, but it is our duty to sound a vigorous warning against becoming infatuated with terror, against taking it to be the chief and basic means of struggle, as so many people strongly incline to do at present. Terror can never be a regular military operation; at best it can only serve as one of the methods employed in a decisive assault. But can we *issue the call* for such

a decisive assault at the present moment? *Rabocheye Dyelo* apparently thinks we can. At any rate, it exclaims: "Form assault columns!" But this, again, is more zeal than reason. The main body of our military forces consists of volunteers and insurgents. We possess only a few small units of regular troops, and these are not even mobilised; they are not connected with one another, nor have they been trained to form columns of any sort, let alone assault columns. In view of all this, it must be clear to anyone who is capable of appreciating the general conditions of our struggle and who is mindful of them at every "turn" in the historical course of events that at the present moment our slogan cannot be "To the assault", but has to be, "Lay siege to the enemy fortress". In other words, the immediate task of our Party is not to summon all available forces for the attack right now, but to call for the formation of a revolutionary organisation capable of uniting all forces and guiding the movement in actual practice and not in name alone, that is, an organisation ready at any time to support every protest and every outbreak and use it to build up and consolidate the fighting forces suitable for the decisive struggle.

The lesson of the February and March events[6] has been so impressive that no disagreement in principle with this conclusion is now likely to be encountered. What we need at the present moment, however, is not a solution of the problem in principle but a practical solution. We should not only be clear on the nature of the organisation that is needed and its precise purpose, but we must elaborate a definite *plan* for an organisation, so that its formation may be undertaken from all aspects. In view of the pressing importance of the question, we, on our part, take the liberty of submitting to the comrades a skeleton plan to be developed in greater detail in a pamphlet now in preparation for print.[7]

In our opinion, the starting-point of our activities, the first step towards creating the desired organisation, or, let us say, the main thread which, if followed, would enable us steadily to develop, deepen, and extend that organisation, should be the founding of an All-Russian political newspaper. A newspaper is what we most of all need; without it we cannot conduct that systematic, all-round propaganda and agitation, consistent in principle, which is the chief

and permanent task of Social-Democracy in general and, in particular, the pressing task of the moment, when interest in politics and in questions of socialism has been aroused among the broadest strata of the population. Never has the need been felt so acutely as today for reinforcing dispersed agitation in the form of individual action, local leaflets, pamphlets, etc., by means of generalised and systematic agitation that can only be conducted with the aid of the periodical press. It may be said without exaggeration that the frequency and regularity with which a newspaper is printed (and distributed) can serve as a precise criterion of how well this cardinal and most essential sector of our militant activities is built up. Furthermore, our newspaper must be All-Russian. If we fail, and as long as we fail, to combine our efforts to influence the people and the government by means of the printed word, it will be utopian to think of combining other means, more complex, more difficult, but also more decisive, for exerting influence. Our movement suffers in the first place, ideologically, as well as in practical and organisational respects, from its state of fragmentation, from the almost complete immersion of the overwhelming majority of Social-Democrats in local work, which narrows their outlook, the scope of their activities, and their skill in the maintenance of secrecy and their preparedness. It is precisely in this state of fragmentation that one must look for the deepest roots of the instability and the waverings noted above. The *first* step towards eliminating this shortcoming, towards transforming divers local movements into a single, All-Russian movement, must be the founding of an All-Russian newspaper. Lastly, what we need is definitely a *political* newspaper. Without a political organ, a political movement deserving that name is inconceivable in the Europe of today. Without such a newspaper we cannot possibly fulfil our task—that of concentrating all the elements of political discontent and protest, of vitalising thereby the revolutionary movement of the proletariat. We have taken the first step, we have aroused in the working class a passion for "economic", factory exposures; we must now take the next step, that of arousing in every section of the population that is at all politically conscious a passion for *political* exposure. We must not be discouraged by the fact that the voice of

political exposure is today so feeble, timid, and infrequent. This is not because of a wholesale submission to police despotism, but because those who are able and ready to make exposures have no tribune from which to speak, no eager and encouraging audience, they do not see anywhere among the people that force to which it would be worth while directing their complaint against the "omnipotent" Russian Government. But today all this is rapidly changing. There is such a force—it is the revolutionary proletariat, which has demonstrated its readiness, not only to listen to and support the summons to political struggle, but boldly to engage in battle. We are now in a position to provide a tribune for the nationwide exposure of the tsarist government, and it is our duty to do this. That tribune must be a Social-Democratic newspaper. The Russian working class, as distinct from the other classes and strata of Russian society, displays a constant interest in political knowledge and manifests a constant and extensive demand (not only in periods of intensive unrest) for illegal literature. When such a mass demand is evident, when the training of experienced revolutionary leaders has already begun, and when the concentration of the working class makes it virtual master in the working-class districts of the big cities and in the factory settlements and communities, it is quite feasible for the proletariat to found a political newspaper. Through the proletariat the newspaper will reach the urban petty bourgeoisie, the rural handicraftsmen, and the peasants, thereby becoming a real people's political newspaper.

The role of a newspaper, however, is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In this last respect it may be likened to the scaffolding round a building under construction, which marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, enabling them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labour. With the aid of the newspaper, and through it, a permanent organisation will naturally take shape that will engage, not only in local activities, but in regular general work, and will train its members to fol-

low political events carefully, appraise their significance and their effect on the various strata of the population, and develop effective means for the revolutionary party to influence those events. The mere technical task of regularly supplying the newspaper with copy and of promoting regular distribution will necessitate a network of local agents of the united party, who will maintain constant contact with one another, know the general state of affairs, get accustomed to performing regularly their detailed functions in the All-Russian work, and test their strength in the organisation of various revolutionary actions. This network of agents* will form the skeleton of precisely the kind of organisation we need—one that is sufficiently large to embrace the whole country; sufficiently broad and many-sided to effect a strict and detailed division of labour; sufficiently well tempered to be able to conduct steadily *its own* work under any circumstances, at all "sudden turns", and in face of all contingencies; sufficiently flexible to be able, on the one hand, to avoid an open battle against an overwhelming enemy, when the enemy has concentrated all his forces at one spot, and yet, on the other, to take advantage of his unwieldiness and to attack him when and where he least expects it. Today we are faced with the relatively easy task of supporting student demonstrations in the streets of big cities; tomorrow we may, perhaps, have the more difficult task of supporting, for example, the unemployed movement in some particular area, and the day after to be at our posts in order to play a revolutionary part in a peasant uprising. Today we must take advantage of the tense political situation arising out of the government's campaign against the Zemstvo; tomorrow we may have to support popular indignation against some tsarist bashi-bazouk on the rampage and help, by means of boycott, indictment demonstrations, etc., to make things so hot for him as to

* It will be understood of course, that these agents could work successfully only in the closest contact with the local committees (groups, study circles) of our Party. In general, the entire plan we project can, of course, be implemented only with the most active support of the committees which have on repeated occasions attempted to unite the Party and which, we are sure, will achieve this unification—if not today, then tomorrow, if not in one way, then in another.

force him into open retreat. Such a degree of combat readiness can be developed only through the constant activity of regular troops. If we join forces to produce a common newspaper, this work will train and bring into the foreground, not only the most skilful propagandists, but the most capable organisers, the most talented political party leaders capable, at the right moment, of releasing the slogan for the decisive struggle and of taking the lead in that struggle.

In conclusion, a few words to avoid possible misunderstanding. We have spoken continuously of systematic, planned preparation, yet it is by no means our intention to imply that the autocracy can be overthrown only by a regular siege or by organised assault. Such a view would be absurd and doctrinaire. On the contrary, it is quite possible, and historically much more probable, that the autocracy will collapse under the impact of one of the spontaneous outbursts or unforeseen political complications which constantly threaten it from all sides. But no political party that wishes to avoid adventurous gambles can base its activities on the anticipation of such outbursts and complications. We must go our own way, and we must steadfastly carry on our regular work, and the less our reliance on the unexpected, the less the chance of our being caught unawares by any "historic turns".

ANOTHER MASSACRE

It seems that we are now passing through a period in which our working-class movement is once more about to engage with irresistible force in the sharp conflicts that terrify the government and the propertied classes and bring joy and encouragement to socialists. Yes, we rejoice in these conflicts and are encouraged by them, notwithstanding the tremendous number of victims claimed by military reprisals, because the working class is proving by its resistance that it is not reconciled to its position, that it refuses to remain in slavery or to submit meekly to violence and tyranny. Even with the most peaceful course of events, the present system always and inevitably exacts countless sacrifices from the working class. Thousands and tens of thousands of men and women, who toil all their lives to create wealth for others, perish from starvation and constant malnutrition, die prematurely from diseases caused by horrible working conditions, by wretched housing and overwork. He is a hundred times a hero who prefers to die fighting in open struggle against the defenders and protectors of this infamous system rather than die the lingering death of a crushed, broken-down, and submissive nag. We do not by any means want to imply that scuffling with the police is the best form of struggle. On the contrary, we have always told the workers that it is in their interests to carry on the struggle in a more calm and restrained manner, and to try to make use of all discontent for support to the organised struggle of the revolutionary party. But the principal source that sustains revolutionary Social-Democracy is the spirit of protest among the working class which, in view of the violence and oppression surrounding the workers, is bound to manifest itself from time to time in the form

of desperate outbursts. These outbursts arouse to conscious life the widest sections of the workers, oppressed by poverty and ignorance, and stimulate in them a noble hatred for the oppressors and enemies of liberty. That is why the news of massacres such as that which took place at the Obukhov Works on May 7, makes us exclaim: "The workers' revolt has been suppressed; long live the revolt of the workers!"

There was a time, and not very long ago at that, when workers' revolts were a rare exception, called forth only by some special circumstances. Now things have changed. A few years ago industry was flourishing, trade was brisk, and the demand for workers was great. Nevertheless, the workers organised a number of strikes to improve their working conditions; they realised that they must not let the moment slip by, that they must take advantage of the time when the employers were making particularly high profits and it would be easier to win concessions from them. The boom, however, has given way to a crisis. The manufacturers cannot sell their goods, profits have declined, bankruptcies have increased, factories are cutting production, and workers are being discharged and turned into the streets in masses without a crust of bread. The workers now have to fight desperately, not to improve their conditions, but to maintain the old standards and to reduce the losses the employers impose on them. And so the working-class movement develops in depth and extent: at first, struggle in exceptional and isolated cases; then, unceasing and stubborn battles during industrial prosperity and the trade boom; finally, similar unceasing and stubborn struggle in the period of crisis. We may now say that the working-class movement has become a permanent feature of our life and that it will grow whatever the conditions.

The change-over from boom to crisis will not only teach our workers that united struggle is a permanent necessity, it will also destroy the harmful illusions that began to take shape at the time of industrial prosperity. By means of strikes, the workers were able in some places to force concessions from the employers with comparative ease, and this "economic" struggle assumed an exaggerated significance; it was forgotten that trade unions and strikes can, at best, only win slightly better terms for the sale of labour-power as a commodity. Trade unions and strikes cannot help in

times of crisis when there is no demand for this "commodity", they cannot change the conditions which convert labour-power into a commodity and which doom the masses of working people to dire need and unemployment. To change these conditions, a revolutionary struggle against the whole existing social and political system is necessary; the industrial crisis will convince very many workers of the justice of this statement.

Let us return to the massacre of May 7. We give below available information on the May strikes and manifestations of unrest among the St. Petersburg workers.[8] We shall also examine the police report of the massacre. Lately we have learned to understand the significance of government (and police) reports of strikes, demonstrations, and clashes with the troops; we have gathered sufficient material to judge the reliability of these reports—the smoke of police falsehoods may sometimes give a clue to the fire of popular indignation.

"On May 7," says the official report, "about two hundred workers employed in various departments of the Obukhov Steel Works in the village of Alexandrovskoye on the Schlüsselburg Highway stopped work after the dinner break, and in the course of their interview with Lieutenant Colonel Ivanov, assistant to the director of the works, put forward a number of groundless demands."

If the workers stopped work without giving two weeks' notice (assuming the stoppage was not due to lawless acts all too frequently committed by the employers), even according to Russian law (which of late has been systematically enlarged and sharpened against the workers), they have merely committed a common offence for which they are liable to prosecution in a magistrate's court. But the Russian Government is making itself more and more ridiculous by its severity. On the one hand, laws are passed designating new crimes (e.g., wilful refusal to work or participation in a mob that damages property or resists armed force), penalties for striking are increased, etc., while on the other, the physical and political possibility of applying these laws and imposing corresponding penalties is disappearing. It is physically impossible to prosecute thousands and tens of thousands of men for refusing to work, for striking, or for

"mobs". It is politically impossible to try each case of this sort, for no matter how the judges are selected and no matter how publicity is emasculated, there still remains at least the shadow of a trial, naturally a "trial" of the government and not of the workers. Thus, criminal laws passed for the definite purpose of facilitating the government's *political* struggle against the proletariat (and at the same time of concealing the political character of the struggle by "state" arguments about "public order", etc.) are steadily forced into the background by *direct* political struggle and open street clashes. "Justice" throws off the mask of majesty and impartiality, and takes to flight, leaving the field to the police, the gendarmes, and the Cossacks, who are greeted with stones.

Let us take the government's reference to the "demands" of the workers. From a legal standpoint stoppage of work is a misdemeanour, irrespective of the workers' demands. But the government has lost its chance of basing itself on the law it recently issued, and it tries to justify its reprisals carried out with "the means at its disposal" by declaring the workers' demands to be without basis. Who were the judges in this affair? Lieutenant-Colonel Ivanov, assistant to the director of the works, the very authority against whom the workers were complaining! It is not surprising, therefore, that the workers reply to such explanations by the powers that be with a hail of stones.

And so, when the workers poured into the street and held up horse trams a real battle began. Apparently the workers fought with all their might, for, although armed only with stones, they managed *twice* to beat off the attacks by police, gendarmes, mounted guards, and the armed factory guard.* It is true, if police reports are to be believed, "several shots" were fired from the crowd, but no one was injured by them. Stones, however, fell "*like hail*", and the workers not only

* Note this! The government communication states that "the armed factory guard" "were already standing by in the factory yard", whereas the gendarmes, mounted guards, and the city police were called out later. Since when, and why, was an *armed* guard maintained *in readiness* in the factory yard? Since the First of May? Did they expect a workers' demonstration? That we do not know; but it is clear that the government is deliberately concealing facts that would explain the mounting discontent and indignation of the workers.

put up a stubborn resistance, they displayed resourcefulness and ability in adapting themselves immediately to the situation and in selecting the best form of struggle. They occupied the neighbouring courtyards and *from over the fences* poured a hail of stones on-the tsar's bashi-bazouks, so that even *after* three volleys had been fired, killing one man (only one?) and wounding eight (?) (one of whom died the following day), even after this, although the crowd had fled, the fight still continued and some companies of the Omsk Infantry Regiment had to be called out to "clear the workers out of the neighbouring courtyards".

The government emerged victorious, but such victories will bring nearer its ultimate defeat. Every clash with the people will increase the number of indignant workers who are ready to fight, and will bring into the foreground more experienced, better armed, and bolder leaders. We have already discussed the plan of action these leaders should follow. We have repeatedly pointed to the imperative necessity for a sound revolutionary organisation. But in connection with the events of May 7, we must not lose sight of the following:

Much has been said recently about the impossibility and the hopelessness of street fighting against modern troops. Particularly insistent on this have been the wise "Critics" who have dragged out the old lumber of bourgeois science in the guise of new, impartial, scientific conclusions, and have distorted Engels' words that refer, with reservations, only to a temporary tactic of the German Social-Democrats.[9] But we see from the example of even this one clash how absurd these arguments are. Street fighting is possible; it is not the position of the fighters, but the position of the government that is hopeless if it has to deal with larger numbers than those employed in a single factory. In the May 7 fighting the workers had nothing but stones, and, of course, the mere prohibition of the city mayor will not prevent them from securing other weapons next time. The workers were unprepared and numbered only three and a half thousand; nevertheless, they repelled the attack of several hundred mounted guards, gendarmes, city police, and infantry. Did the police find it easy to storm the *one* house, No. 63, Schlüsselburg Highway?[10] Ask yourselves—will it be easy to

"*clear the workers*" out of whole blocks, not merely out of one or two courtyards, in the St. Petersburg working-class districts? When the time of decisive battle comes, will it not be necessary to "*clea*r" the houses and courtyards of the capital, not only of workers, but of all who have not forgotten the infamous massacre of March 4,[11] who have not become reconciled to the police government, but are only terrified by it and not yet confident of their own strength?

Comrades! Do your best to collect the names of those killed and wounded on May 7. Let all workers in the capital honour their memory and prepare for a new and decisive struggle against the police government for the people's liberty!

Iskra, No. 5, June 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

THE PERSECUTORS OF THE ZEMSTVO AND THE HANNIBALS OF LIBERALISM[12]

Written in June 1901
First published in December 1901
in *Zarya*, No. 2-3
Signed: *T. P.*

Published according to the text in
the magazine, checked with the text
in the collection:
Vl. Ilyin. *Twelve Years*. 1907

№ 2-3

Декабрь

1901-го г.

ЗАРЯ

Соціаль-демократическій научно-политическій журналъ. Издается при ближайшемъ участіи Г. В. Плеханова, В. И. Засуличъ и П. Б. Аксельрода.

Цѣна 3 руб.

Die

Morgenröthe

Heft 2-3

Dezember 1901

Stuttgart

J. H. W. Dietz Nachf. (G. m. b. H.)

1901

Facsimile of the cover of the magazine *Zarya*, No. 2-3, 1901, which published the following of Lenin's writings: "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", the first four chapters of "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" (under the heading "The 'Critics' on the Agrarian Question"), and "Review of Home Affairs"

Facsimile of the cover of the magazine Заря, No. 2-3, 1901, which published the following of Lenin's writings: "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", the first four chapters of "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" (under the heading: "The 'Critics' on the Agrarian Question"), and "Review of Home Affairs"

It has been said of the Russian peasant that he is poorest of all in the consciousness of his poverty; of the ordinary Russian subject, it may be said that, while he is poor in civil rights, he is poorest of all in the consciousness of his lack of rights. Just as the peasant has grown accustomed to his wretched poverty, to living his life without pondering over the causes of his wretchedness, or the possibility of removing it, so the plain Russian subject has become accustomed to the omnipotence of the government, to living on without a thought as to whether the government can retain its arbitrary power any longer and whether, side by side with it, there are not forces undermining the outmoded political system. A particularly good "antidote" to this political apathy and somnolence is usually contained in the "secret documents"* which reveal that, not only desperate cutthroats and confirmed enemies of the government, but also members of the government itself, including ministers, and even the tsar, realise the tottering state of the autocracy and seek ways and means to improve their position, which they consider totally unsatisfactory. One such document is the Memorandum drawn up by Witte, who, having quarrelled with the Minister of the Interior, Goremykin, over the question of introducing Zemstvo institutions in the outlying regions, decided to display his perspicacity and his loyalty to the autocracy by drawing up an indictment against the Zemstvo.**

---

* I refer, of course, only to that "antidote"—by no means the sole or even the most "powerful" one—which is represented by the press.

** *The Autocracy and the Zemstvo*. A Confidential Memorandum by the Minister of Finance, S. Y. Witte, with a preface and annotations by R. N. S. Published by *Zarya*,[13] Stuttgart, Verlag von J. H. W. Dietz Nachf., 1901, pp. xliv and 212.

The charge is levelled against the Zemstvo that it is incompatible with autocracy, that by its very nature it is constitutional, that its existence inevitably gives rise to friction and conflict between the representatives of the public and the government. The indictment is drawn up on the basis of vast (relatively) and fairly well prepared material, and since it is an indictment concerning a political affair (a rather peculiar one at that), we may be sure that it will be read with no less interest and will prove no less useful, than were the indictments in political trials once published in our newspapers.

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

I

Let us endeavour to determine whether the assertion that our Zemstvo is constitutional is borne out by the facts, and if so, to what extent, and in what precise sense.

In this matter, the epoch in which the Zemstvo was introduced is of particular importance. The fall of serfdom was a historical event of such magnitude that it inevitably made a rent in the police veil concealing class antagonisms. The most solidified and best educated class, and the one most accustomed to political power—the nobility—displayed a very definite desire to restrict the power of the autocracy by means of representative institutions. The reference to this fact in Witte's Memorandum is extremely instructive. He says: "Declarations concerning the necessity of 'representation for the nobility' and concerning 'the right of the Russian nation to elect its representatives to advise the supreme authority' were made at assemblies of nobles as far back as 1859-60." "Even the word 'constitution' was uttered."* "Several Gubernia** Committees

* Dragomanov, "Zemstvo Liberalism in Russia", p. 4. Witte very often fails to mention that he has quoted from Dragomanov (cf., for example, pp. 36-37 of the Memorandum and pp. 55-56 of the above-mentioned article), although he refers to him in some other passages.

** *Gubernia*, *uyezd*, *volost*—Russian administrative-territorial units. The largest of these was the gubernia, which had its subdivisions in uyezds, which in turn were subdivided into volosts. This system of districting continued under the Soviet power until the introduction of the new system of administrative-territorial division of the country in 1929-30.—*Tr.*

for the Peasant Question and individual members of committees called before the drafting commissions urged the necessity of drawing the public into participation in the administration. 'Deputies are openly striving for a constitution,' wrote Nikitenko in his diary in 1859."

"When, after the promulgation of the Regulations of February 19, 1861,[14] the hopes entertained in the autocracy were far from realised, and, moreover, when the 'redder' elements in the administration (like N. Milyutin) were alienated from the implementation of the Regulations, the movement in favour of 'representation' became more nearly unanimous. It found expression in resolutions moved in many assemblies of nobles in 1862, and in petitions drawn up by the assemblies in Novgorod, Tula, Smolensk, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Tver. The most remarkable of these was the Moscow petition, which pleaded for local self-government, public trials, obligatory redemption of peasant lands, publication of budgets, freedom of the press, and the convening in Moscow of a National Duma representing all classes for the purpose of drawing up a complete system of reforms. Sharpest were the decisions adopted and the petition drawn up by the nobility of Tver on February 2, urging the necessity of introducing a number of civil and economic reforms (e.g., equality of rights for all social-estates, obligatory redemption of peasant lands) and 'the convocation of elected representatives of the whole Russian nation as the only means for satisfactorily settling the questions raised, but not settled, in the Regulations of February 19'.*

"Despite the administrative and judicial penalties inflicted on the initiators of the Tver petition**—continues Dragomanov—(not for

---

* Dragomanov, op. cit., p. 5. Cited in an abridged form in the Memorandum, p. 64, with a reference, not to Dragomanov, but to *Kolokol*, No. 126 and to *Revue des deux Mondes*, June 15, 1862.[15]

** Incidentally, one of the initiators of this petition, Nikolai Alexandrovich Bakunin, a younger brother of the famed M. A. Bakunin, passed away recently (April 19, this year, i.e., 1901) at his estate in Tver Gubernia. Nikolai Alexandrovich signed the petition of 1862, together with his younger brother Alexei and other mediators. This petition, relates the author of an item on N. A. Bakunin, published in one of our newspapers, called down punishment upon its signatories. After a year's confinement in the Fortress of Peter and Paul the signatories were released, but Nikolai Alexandrovich and his brother Alexei were not pardoned (they had not signed the petition for pardon) and as a consequence, were prohibited from holding public office. After that, N. A. Bakunin never made a public appearance, nor could he speak publicly again.... In this manner our government retaliated against the lawful actions of the landed nobility at the time of "the great reforms"! And this was in 1862, prior to the Polish rebellion, at a time when even Katkov[16] proposed the convocation of a Zemsky Sobor. [*Zemsky Sobor* (National Assembly) and

the petition directly, but for the sharp motivation attached to the collective resignation of the civil mediators[17]), declarations in the same spirit were made at various assemblies of nobles in 1862 and early in 1863, at which projects for local self-government were also drawn up.

"At this time, a constitutional movement was in progress also among the *raznochintsi*,[18] finding expression there in more or less revolutionary secret societies and proclamations: *Velikoruss* (between August and November 1861, officers like Obruchev and others took part in its publication), *Zemskaya Duma* (1862), *Zemlya i Volya* (1862-63).... *Velikoruss* published a draft petition which, as many said, was to have been submitted to the tsar during the Thousand Years of Russia celebrations in August 1862." The draft petition stated *inter alia*: "May it please Your Majesty to convene in one of the capitals of our Russian fatherland, in Moscow or in St. Petersburg, the representatives of the Russian nation in order that they may draw up a constitution for Russia...."*

If we recall also the proclamation *To Young Russia*,[19] the numerous arrests and the Draconic punishments inflicted upon the "political" criminals (Obruchev, Mikhailov, and others), culminating in the frame-up of Chernyshevsky[20] and his being sentenced illegally to penal servitude, we shall have a complete picture of the social situation that gave rise to the Zemstvo reform. Witte states only *half* the truth in his Memorandum when he says that "the idea underlying the establishment of Zemstvo institutions was undoubtedly a political one", that governing circles "undoubtedly took into consideration" the liberal and constitutionalist aspirations of the people. The hidebound official view on social phenomena, which the author of the Memorandum reveals throughout, is here demonstrated by his ignoring the *revolutionary* movement and by his concealing the Draconic measures of repression with which the government *protected* itself against the onset of the revolutionary "party". True, from our modern viewpoint, it seems strange to speak of a revolutionary "party" and of its onset at the beginning of the sixties. Forty years of historical experience have made us more exacting with regard to what may be called revolutionary movements and revolutionary onsets. But it must not be forgotten that at that time, after thirty years of the rule

---

National Duma were current in Russian literature of the sixties of the past century as terms denoting national representative assembly.—*Tr.*]

* Cf. V. Burtsev, *One Hundred Years*, p. 39.

of Nicholas I, no one could have foreseen the course of events, no one could have estimated the government's real strength of resistance or the real strength of the people's indignation. Even the most cautious and sober politician could not but acknowledge the possibility of a revolutionary outbreak and the serious danger of a peasant revolt—in the obtaining conditions of the revival of the democratic movement in Europe; the ferment in Poland; the discontent in Finland; the demands for political reforms made by the entire press and by all the nobility; the widespread distribution of *Kolokol* throughout Russia; the powerful appeals of Chernyshevsky, who was able, by means even of censored articles, to educate genuine *revolutionaries*; the appearance of proclamations; the ferment among the peasants, who were "very often"* *compelled* by armed force and bloodshed to accept the Regulations that

* L. Panteleyev, "Reminiscences of the Sixties", in the collection of essays, *At the Glorious Post* (p. 315).[21] This minor piece contains a number of very interesting facts on the revolutionary unrest in 1861-62 and on the police reaction.... "Early in 1862 the social atmosphere was extremely tense; the slightest incident could have given a strong impetus to the course of events in either direction. The impetus was given by the great conflagrations that occurred in St. Petersburg in May of that year." These fires first broke out on May 16 and raged with particular fierceness on May 22 and 23—on the latter date there were five conflagrations. On May 28, the Apraksin Place [a market-place in St. Petersburg named after its owner, Count Apraksin.—*Tr.*] caught fire and a wide area surrounding it was laid waste. The populace attributed these fires to the students, and the rumours were taken up by the newspapers. The manifesto *To Young Russia*, proclaiming a bloody war against the whole existing system and justifying every means to this end, was taken to confirm the rumours of incendiarism. "After May 28, something in the nature of martial law was proclaimed in St. Petersburg." A special committee was established with powers to take *extraordinary* measures for the protection of the capital. The city was divided into three zones, each under the control of a military governor. A field court martial was set up to try those accused of incendiarism. *Sovremennik*[22] and *Russkoye Slovo*[23] were suspended for eight months; *Dyen*,[24] published by Aksakov, was suppressed. Stringent temporary press regulations (sanctioned on May 12, *i.e.*, *before the fires broke out*; consequently, "*the progress of events*" was towards reaction and was unrelated to the fires, the opinion of Mr. Panteleyev notwithstanding) and regulations for the surveillance of printing locations were resorted to. Numerous political arrests were made (Chernyshevsky and N. Serno-Solovyevich, Rymarenko, and others); Sunday schools and public reading-rooms were closed; permits for public lectures in St. Petersburg

stripped them of everything; the refusal of whole groups of civil mediators from among the nobility to apply *such* Regulations, and, finally, the student disorders. Under such circumstances, the autocratic government, which held it to be its lofty mission to protect, at all costs, the omnipotence and irresponsibility of the court camarilla and the army of official leeches, on the one hand, and to support the worst representatives of the exploiting classes, on the other—such a government *had no other recourse* than ruthlessly to exterminate individuals, the conscious and indomitable enemies of tyranny and exploitation (i.e., "the ringleaders" of "the revolutionary party"), terrify the masses of discontented people, and bribe them with small concessions. This meant penal servitude for those who preferred to remain silent rather than pour forth stupid or hypocritical phrases about the "great emancipation"; reforms (*innocuous for the autocracy and the exploiting classes*) for those who waxed enthusiastic over the liberalism of the government and the era of progress.

We do not wish to suggest that these calculated reactionary police tactics were clearly conceived and systematically pursued by all, or even by a few, of the members of the ruling clique. Some of them, on account of their narrow-mindedness, may not have pondered on the significance of these tactics as a whole and may have been childishly enthusiastic about "liberalism", failing to observe its police mantling. In general, however, there is no doubt that the collective experience and collective reasoning of the rulers compelled them to pursue these tactics unswervingly. Not in vain did most of the grandees and notables undergo a prolonged training in bureaucratic and police methods in the service

---

became more difficult to obtain; and the second department of the Literary Fund[25] and even the Chess Club[26] were closed down.

The Committee of Inquiry failed to establish any connection between the fires and politics. One of its members, Stolbovsky, told Mr. Panteleyev that in the Committee "he succeeded in exposing the principal false witnesses who, it seems, were the cat's-paw of police agents" (325-26). Thus, there are weighty grounds for believing that the rumours about *student incendiarism were circulated by the police*. The despicable exploitation of the ignorance of the people for the purpose of slandering revolutionaries and protesters was, therefore, in full swing at the height of the "epoch of great reforms".

of Nicholas I, and were, so to speak, case-hardened by fire and water. They remembered how sovereigns had at one time flirted with liberalism, and at another acted as the executioners of the Radishchevs[27] and "let loose" the Arakcheyevs[28] at their loyal subjects; they remembered December 14, 1820,[29] and they played the role of gendarme of Europe the Russian Government had played in 1848-49.[30] The historical experience of autocracy not only compelled the government to pursue tactics of intimidation and corruption, but also compelled many independent liberals to recommend these tactics to the government. In proof of this, we shall quote the opinions of Koshelev and Kavelin. In his pamphlet, *Constitution, Autocracy, and the National Duma* (Leipzig, 1862), A. Koshelev expresses *opposition* to a constitution, advocates the convening of a National Advisory Duma, and anticipates the following objection:

"To convene a National Duma means to lead Russia towards revolution, i.e., to repeat, in Russia, the *États généraux*,[31] which were subsequently transformed into the Convention and which came to an end with the events of 1792, the proscriptions, the guillotine, the *noyades*,* etc." "No, gentlemen," replied Koshelev, "it will not be the convocation of a National Duma that will prepare the ground for revolution, as you understand it. Revolution will come much more surely and rapidly as a result of the hesitant and contradictory actions of the government, one step forward—one step backward, edicts and laws impossible of execution, the restraints placed upon thought and speech; as a result of the police (open, and what is worse, secret) surveillance over the actions of the social-estates and of private persons, the petty persecution of certain individuals, the plunder of the Treasury, the squandering of public funds and the lavish granting of rewards, the incapacity of statesmen and their alienation from Russia, etc., etc. A country just awakening from centuries of oppression can be more surely driven to revolution (again as you understand it) by military executions, solitary confinement, and banishment; for rankling wounds are incomparably more sensitive and painful than fresh wounds. But have no fear, the revolution, which, as you suppose, was brought about in France by journalists and other writers, will not break out in Russia. Let us also hope that no society of desperate hotheads, who choose assassination as a means of attaining their ends, will be formed in Russia (although it is more difficult to vouch for that). What is more probable and dangerous is that, influenced by the split and unobserved by the rural, urban, and secret police, an alliance will be established between the peasants and the petty-bourgeois townspeople,

* Mass executions, by drowning.—*Ed.*

which will be joined by young and old, writers and adherents of *Velikoruss*, *Young Russia*, etc. Such an all-destructive alliance, advocating equality, not before, but despite, the law (What matchless liberalism! We, of course, are in favour of equality, but not of equality *despite* the law—the law which destroys equality!), not the popular, historical village commune, but its morbid progeny, and not the rule of reason, which certain office-holders fear so much, but the rule of brute force, which these office-holders so readily employ—such an alliance, I say, is far more probable in Russia and may be far more powerful than the moderate, well-meaning, and independent opposition to the government which our bureaucrats abhor so much and which they try so hard to restrict and suppress. Do not imagine that the party or the inner, secret, and anonymous press is small and weak, do not imagine that you have plucked it out root and branch. No! By preventing the youth from completing their education, by treating youthful pranks as if they were political crimes, by petty persecution and police surveillance you have increased the strength of that party tenfold, and have multiplied it and spread it throughout the Empire. What will our statesmen resort to in the face of an outbreak resulting from such an alliance? Armed force? But will that be absolutely reliable?" (pp. 49-51).

Do not the pompous phrases of this tirade obviously suggest the tactics: destroy the "hotheads" and the adherents of the "alliance between the peasants and the petty-bourgeois townspeople"; satisfy and disunite the "well-meaning and moderate opposition" through concessions? But the government proved to be cleverer and more agile than the Koshelevs imagined; it conceded much less than a National "Advisory" Duma.

And the following from a private letter written by K. D. Kavelin to Herzen,[32] dated August 6, 1862: "... The news from Russia is not so bad, in my opinion. It was not Nicholas Solovyevich that was arrested, but Alexander. The arrests do not surprise me and, I confess, do not seem to me outrageous. A revolutionary party considers every means to overthrow the government justified, while the government defends itself by every means at its disposal. Arrests and banishment under the reign of the despicable Nicholas were quite another thing. People then died for their ideas, their convictions, their faith, and their utterances. I would like to see you in the government's boots and see what you would do against a party that is secretly and openly working against you. I like Chernyshevsky very, very much, but never in my life have I seen such a *brouillon* [an irascible, unso-

ciable bully, a sower of discord],* such a tactless and cocksure fellow! To perish in vain, for absolutely no reason at all! There cannot be the least doubt now that the conflagrations have a connection with the leaflets."** What an example of servile-professorial profundity! It is the revolutionaries who are to blame for everything; it is they who are conceited enough to hiss at phrase-mongering liberals, they who are so impudent as to work secretly and openly against the government and so tactless as to get themselves incarcerated in the Fortress of Peter and Paul. He, too, the liberal professor, would punish people like these "with all the means at his disposal", were he in power.

II

Thus, the Zemstvo reform was one of the concessions forced from the autocratic government by public ferment and revolutionary pressure. We have dealt with the character of this pressure in detail in order to supplement and correct the picture outlined in the Memorandum by its bureaucratic author, who obscured the struggle that had given rise to this concession. Nevertheless, the half-hearted and pusillanimous character of this concession is quite clearly described in the Memorandum:

"At first, when the Zemstvo reform was just being undertaken, it was no doubt intended as a first step toward the introduction of representative institutions***, but later, when Count Lanskoi and N. A. Milyutin were replaced by Count Valuyev, there was an obvious desire, as even the ex-Minister of the Interior admits, to act in a spirit of 'conciliation', 'softly and evasively'. 'The government has no clear

* Interpolations in square brackets (within passages quoted by Lenin) have been introduced by Lenin, unless otherwise indicated.—*Tr.*

** We quote from the German translation of Dragomanov's edition of the correspondence of K. D. Kavelin and I. S. Turgenev with A. I. Herzen: *Bibliothek russischer Denkwürdigkeiten*, herausgegeben von Th. Schiemann, Stuttgart, 1894, Bd. 4, *S.* 65-66.

*** There is "no doubt" that the author of the Memorandum, in employing the language of Leroy-Beaulieu, commits the usual bureaucratic exaggeration. There is "no doubt" that neither Lanskoi nor Milyutin had anything very definite in mind, and it is ridiculous to regard the evasive phrases of Milyutin ("in principle in favour of the Constitution, but regards its introduction as premature") as a "first step".

idea of its aims,' he said at the time. In short, an attempt was made—unfortunately made so often by statesmen and always with bad results for everyone—to act evasively between two opposite opinions, to satisfy liberal aspirations and preserve the existing system."

The pharisaical word "unfortunately" is highly amusing. A minister of the police government describes as casual the tactics which the government *could not but pursue* and did pursue in adopting the factory inspection laws, as well as the law on the reduction of the working day (June 2, 1897), and which it is now (1901) pursuing in General Vannovsky's flirtation with the "public".[33]

"On the one hand, it was stated in the explanatory Memorandum attached to the regulations governing Zemstvo institutions that the purpose of the proposed law was to develop as completely and as consistently as possible the principle of local self-government, and that 'the Zemstvo administration is merely a special organ of one and the same state authority'.... *Severnaya Pochta*, then the organ of the Ministry of the Interior, hinted broadly that the institutions to be established were to serve as schools for representative bodies.

"On the other hand, ... the Zemstvo institutions are described in the explanatory Memorandum as private and as public institutions, subject to the general laws in the same way as individual societies and private persons are subject....

"Both the provisions in the Regulations of 1864 and, in particular, all the subsequent measures adopted by the Ministry of the Interior in relation to the Zemstvo institutions clearly indicate that the 'independence' of the Zemstvo institutions was seen as a great danger, and that the government was afraid to permit the proper development of these institutions, being *fully aware of what that would lead to*. [Our italics throughout.] ... There is no doubt that those who had to carry out the Zemstvo reform did so *merely as a concession to public opinion*, in order as the explanatory Memorandum stated, 'to limit the *unrealisable expectations and radical aspirations* which have been aroused *among the various social-estates* in connection with the establishment of the Zemstvo institutions'; at the same time, these people fully understood it [the reform?] *and strove to prevent the proper development of the Zemstvo*, to give it a private character, restrict its powers, etc. While pacifying the liberals with the promise that the first step would not be the last and declaring, or, to be more precise, echoing the adherents of the liberal trend, that it was necessary to grant the Zemstvo institutions real and independent powers, Count Valuyev, *in the very act of drafting the Regulations of 1864, strove in every way to restrict the powers of those institutions and place them under strict administrative guardianship*....

"Bereft of a single guiding idea, representing a compromise between two opposite trends, the Zemstvo institutions, in the form in which they were established by the Regulations of 1864, proved in practice

to be out of accord with the fundamental idea of local self-government on which they were based, as well as with the administrative system into which they were mechanically inserted and which, moreover, had neither been reformed nor adapted to the new conditions of life. The Regulations of 1864 sought to reconcile the irreconcilable and in that way to satisfy both the advocates and opponents of Zemstvo self-government. *The former were offered superficialities and hopes for the future, while in order to satisfy the latter the powers of the Zemstvo institutions were given an extremely elastic definition.*"

What pointed words our ministers sometimes accidentally let drop when they desire to put a spoke in the wheel of one of their colleagues and to display their profundity, and how useful it would be for every one of our self-complacent Russians and all admirers of the "great" reforms to hang on their walls in golden frames the wise police maxims: "Pacify the liberals with the promise that the first step will not be the last", "offer" them "superficialities and hopes for the future"! It would be particularly useful at the present time to refer to these precepts when reading in articles or other items in newspapers about General Vannovsky's "heartfelt solicitude".

Thus, from the very beginning, the Zemstvo was doomed to serve as a fifth wheel to the wagon of Russian state administration, a wheel *tolerated* by the bureaucracy only insofar as it would not disturb its absolute authority, while the role of the representatives of the population was restricted to the simple technical fulfilment of the functions outlined by this very bureaucracy. The Zemstvos had no executive organs of their own, they had to act through the police, they had no contact with one another, and they were immediately placed under the control of the administration. Having made such a harmless concession, the government, on the very day after the establishment of the Zemstvos, began systematically to impose restrictions upon them; the almighty bureaucratic clique *could not* reconcile itself to the elected representation of the social-estates and began to persecute it in every possible way. A very interesting part of the Memorandum is the summary of facts on this persecution, notwithstanding its obvious incompleteness.

We have seen how pusillanimous and irrational was the attitude of the liberals towards the revolutionary movement at the beginning of the sixties. Instead of supporting the

"alliance of the petty-bourgeois townspeople and the peasants with the adherents of *Velikoruss*", they feared this "alliance" and held it up as a bogy with which to scare the government. Instead of rising to the defence of the leaders of the democratic movement, persecuted by the government, they pharisaically washed their hands of them and justified the action of the government. This treacherous policy of grandiloquence and shameful flabbiness met with poetic justice. Having dealt with those who proved themselves capable, not merely of jabbering about liberty, but of *fighting* for it, the government felt sufficiently strong to squeeze the liberals out of even the minor and inferior positions which they had occupied "with the permission of the authorities". So long as the "alliance of the petty-bourgeois townspeople and the peasants" with the revolutionaries represented a serious menace, the Ministry of the Interior itself mumbled words about a "school of representative institutions", but when the "tactless and cock-sure" hecklers and hotheads had been removed, the "scholars" were treated with an iron hand. Then a tragicomical epic began. The Zemstvo appealed for an extension of its rights, but was *deprived* of one right after another and given "fatherly" homilies in answer to its petitions. But let the historical dates, even those presented in the Memorandum, speak for themselves.

On October 12, 1866, the Ministry of the Interior issued a circular subordinating the Zemstvo employees completely to government institutions. On November 21 a law was passed restricting the right of the Zemstvo in taxing commercial and industrial establishments. The St. Petersburg Zemstvo Assembly, in 1867, sharply criticised this law, and (on the proposal of Count A. P. Shuvalov) adopted a decision to petition the government to arrange for the questions touched upon by this law to be discussed by "the combined forces and with the simultaneous efforts of the central administration and the Zemstvo". The government's answer to this petition was to close down the St. Petersburg Zemstvo institutions and to resort to reprisals: the chairman of the St. Petersburg Zemstvo Board, Kruse, was banished to Orenburg; Count Shuvalov—to Paris; and Senator Luboshchinsky was ordered to resign. *Severnaya Pochta*, organ of the Ministry of the Interior, published an article in which "these

stern measures of punishment were explained by the fact that the Zemstvo Assemblies, too, from the very opening of their sessions, had acted contrary to the law [to what law? and why were the law-breakers not brought *to trial*, when only shortly before a speedy, just, and merciful court procedure had been introduced?]; that instead of supporting the Zemstvo Assemblies of other gubernias, utilising for that purpose the rights which His Majesty has graciously granted them for exercising proper care over the local economic interests of the Zemstvo in their charge [i.e., instead of being humbly submissive and following the "intentions" of the officialdom], they strove continuously, by falsely explaining the case and misinterpreting the laws, *to rouse sentiments of mistrust and lack of respect for the government*". After such an admonition, it is not surprising that "the other Zemstvos failed to support the St. Petersburg Zemstvo, although the law of November 21, 1866, had everywhere given rise to deep-going discontent, so that at meetings many people declared it to be tantamount to destroying the Zemstvos".

On December 16, 1866, the Senate issued a "clarification" granting the governors of the gubernias the right to refuse endorsement to any person elected by a Zemstvo Assembly whom the respective governor deemed politically unreliable. On May 4, 1867, there followed another Senate interpretation to the effect that communication of Zemstvo proposals to other gubernias was contrary to law, since Zemstvo institutions must concern themselves only with local affairs. On June 13 the Council of State issued a ruling, with Imperial sanction, prohibiting publication of decisions, minutes, reports of discussions, etc., of the meetings of Zemstvo, urban, and social-estate assemblies without the consent of the gubernia authorities. Further, that law extended the powers of chairmen of Zemstvo Assemblies; it granted them the right to close meetings at their discretion and imposed upon them the obligation, *under threat of punishment*, to close any meeting at which questions not in consonance with the law were presented for discussion. The public greeted this measure with hostility, regarding it as a serious restriction of Zemstvo activity. "Every one knows," Nikitenko entered in his diary, "that the Zemstvos are tied hand and foot by the new regulations which give the chairmen of

Assemblies and the governors of gubernias almost unlimited powers over them." The circular of October 8, 1868 makes it obligatory to obtain the consent of the governor for the publication even of the reports of the Zemstvo Boards and restricts inter-communication between Zemstvos. In 1869 the office of inspector of elementary schools was established for the purpose of taking the effective management of elementary education out of the hands of the Zemstvos. A regulation issued by the Committee of Ministers on September 19, 1869, which received Imperial sanction, declares that "neither in their composition nor in their fundamental principles are Zemstvo institutions governmental authorities". The law of July 4 and the circular of October 22, 1870 confirm and increase the subordination of Zemstvo employees to the governors of the gubernias. In 1871 instructions were issued to the inspectors of elementary schools empowering them to dismiss teachers who were deemed politically unreliable and to suspend all decisions of the school councils and submit them to the school guardians for their sanction. On December 25, 1873, Alexander II, in a rescript addressed to the Minister of Education, expressed the fear that *unless proper guardianship and control are exercised over them*, the elementary schools may be converted "*into an instrument for the moral corruption of the people, some attempts at which have already been disclosed*," and he ordered the marshals of the nobility, by their close co-operation, to preserve the moral influence of the schools. In 1874 a new regulation concerning the elementary schools was issued, which placed the management of the schools entirely in the hands of the head masters. The Zemstvo "protested"—if a petition pleading that the law be revised and that the representatives of the Zemstvo take part in this revision (the petition of the Kazan Zemstvo in 1874) can, without irony, be described as a protest. Of course, the petition was rejected. Etc., etc.

III

Such was the first course of lessons given to Russian citizens in the "school of representative institutions" opened by the Ministry of the Interior. Fortunately, in addition to the political scholars who, in connection with the constitu-

tional declarations of the sixties, wrote that "it is time to give up all nonsense and get down to business, and business is now in the Zemstvo institutions and nowhere else",* there were in Russia also "hotheads", who were not satisfied with such "tact" and went with revolutionary propaganda among the people. Although they adhered to a theory which in essence was not revolutionary, their propaganda roused a spirit of discontent and protest among broad strata of the educated youth. Despite their utopian theory, which rejected political struggle, the movement led to a desperate grapple between the government and a handful of heroes, to a struggle for political freedom. Thanks to this struggle, and to it alone, the situation again changed; the government was once more compelled to make concessions, and the liberals once again revealed their political immaturity, their inability to support the fighters and bring real pressure to bear upon the government. The constitutional aspirations of the Zemstvo became very marked, but these proved to be but a feeble "impulse", despite the fact that Zemstvo liberalism in itself had made decided political progress. Particularly noteworthy was its attempt to establish an illegal party and to set up its own political organ. In his Memorandum, Witte summarises some of these illegal writings (of Cannan, Dragomanov, Tikhomirov), in order to demonstrate the "slippery path" (p. 98) upon which the Zemstvo had entered. In the late seventies, several congresses of Zemstvo liberals were held. The liberals decided "to take measures to bring about at least a temporary cessation of the destructive activities of the extreme revolutionary party, for they were convinced that nothing could be achieved by peaceful means if the terrorists continued to irritate and alarm the government by threats and acts of violence" (p. 99). Thus, instead of making an effort to extend the struggle, to secure considerable public support for individual revolutionaries, to organise some sort of public pressure (in the form of demonstrations, of refusal by the Zemstvo to carry out compulsory expenditures, etc.), the liberals again appealed for "tact"—"not to irritate"

* A letter written by Kavelin to relatives in 1865, in which he refers to the petition of the Moscow nobility for "the convocation of a general assembly of representatives of the land of Russia to discuss needs common to the whole state".

the government!—to employ the "peaceful means" that had so brilliantly proved their futility in the sixties!* Of course, the revolutionaries refused to agree to any cessation or suspension of fighting actions. The Zemstvo supporters then formed the League of Oppositional Elements, which was later transformed into the Zemstvo Union and Self-Government Society, or Zemstvo Union. The programme of the Zemstvo Union contained the following demands: (1) freedom of speech and the press, (2) inviolability of the person, and (3) the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. An attempt to publish illegal pamphlets in Galicia failed (the Austrian police seized the manuscripts and the persons who intended to print them), and in August 1881 *Volnoye Slovo*,[34] edited in Geneva by Dragomanov (ex-professor of Kiev University), became the official organ of the Zemstvo Union. "In the final analysis," wrote Dragomanov in 1888, "the attempt to publish *Volnoye Slovo* as a Zemstvo organ cannot be regarded as successful, if only for the reason that Zemstvo material did not begin to reach the editorial office regularly until late in 1882 and publication ceased in May 1883" (op. cit., p. 40). The failure of the liberal organ was a natural effect of the weakness of the liberal movement. On November 20, 1878, Alexander II delivered a speech at a meeting of representatives of the social-estates in Moscow, in which he expressed the hope that "he would obtain their co-operation in checking the erring younger generation which was pursuing the fatal path whither suspect persons were striving to lead it." Later, an appeal for public co-operation appeared in *Pravitelstvenny Vestnik*[35] (No. 186, 1878). In reply, five Zemstvo Assemblies (Kharkov, Poltava, Chernigov, Samara, and Tver) issued declarations urging the need to convene a National Assembly. "We may believe also," says Witte in his Memorandum, after summarising in detail the contents

* Dragomanov said in all justice: "As a matter of fact, liberalism in Russia cannot employ absolutely 'peaceful means', because every declaration in favour of changing the higher administration is prohibited by law. The Zemstvo liberals should have stepped resolutely over the bounds of this prohibition, and in this way at least have demonstrated their strength to both the government and the terrorists. As the Zemstvo liberals did not demonstrate this strength, they lived to see the day when the government revealed its intention to destroy the already truncated Zemstvo institutions" (ibid., pp. 41-42).

of these petitions, of which only three appeared in the press in full, "that the Zemstvo declarations on the convocation of a National Assembly would have been far more numerous, had not the Ministry of the Interior taken timely steps to prevent such declarations; the marshals of the nobility, as chairmen of gubernia Zemstvo Assemblies, received circular letters instructing them to prevent even the reading of such petitions at meetings of the assemblies. In some places, arrests were made and councillors banished. In Chernigov the meeting hall was invaded and forcibly cleared by gendarmes" (p. 104).

The liberal magazines and newspapers supported the movement. A petition signed by "twenty-five prominent Moscow citizens" addressed to Loris-Melikov asked for the convocation of an independent assembly of representatives of the Zemstvos which should be given the right to participate in the government of the nation. In appointing Loris-Melikov Minister of the Interior, the government was *apparently* making a concession. But only *apparently*; for not only were no decisive steps taken, there were not even any declarations that might be called positive and incapable of misinterpretation. Loris-Melikov called together the editors of St. Petersburg periodicals and explained to them "the programme": to learn the wishes, needs, etc., of the population, to enable the Zemstvos, etc., to enjoy their legal rights (the liberal programme guarantees the Zemstvos those "rights" of which the law systematically deprives them!), etc. The author of the Memorandum states:

"Through the medium of these interlocutors the Minister's programme was circulated throughout Russia—for which purpose they had been called together. In point of fact, the programme did not promise anything definite. One could read into it anything one desired, i.e., everything or nothing. A leaflet secretly distributed at the time was right in its way [only in "its" way, not absolutely in "every" way!] when it stated that the programme simultaneously wagged a 'fox tail' and gnashed 'wolf's fangs'. This attack on the programme and its author is the more understandable, because, in communicating the programme to the representatives of the press, the Count strongly urged them 'not to confuse and not to excite the public mind needlessly with their

visionary illusions'." But the liberal Zemstvo supporters refused to listen to the *truth* contained in the secret leaflet and accepted the wagging of the "fox tail" as a "new policy" worthy of confidence. "The Zemstvos believed and sympathised with the government," says the Memorandum, quoting an illegally published pamphlet, *The Opinions of the Zemstvo Assemblies on the Present State of Russia*, "and they seemed afraid of running too far ahead and of pestering the government with excessive requests." A characteristic admission on the part of the Zemstvo adherents, who enjoyed freedom of expression! The Zemstvo Union at its congress in 1880 had only just decided "to strive to secure central popular representation, of which an absolute condition would be a single chamber and universal suffrage", when this decision to *strive to secure* was carried out by the tactic of refraining from "*running too far ahead*" and "*believing and sympathising with*" ambiguous declarations that bind no one to anything! With unpardonable naïveté, the Zemstvo adherents imagined that presenting petitions meant "striving to secure"—and petitions "poured in from the Zemstvos in abundance". On January 28, 1881, Loris-Melikov submitted a most humble Memorial to the tsar proposing the establishment of a commission of Zemstvo representatives with advisory powers only, for the purpose of drafting the laws His Majesty would be pleased to indicate. The Special Council set up by Alexander II approved of this measure; the findings of the Council of February 17, 1881, were confirmed by the Tsar, who also approved the text of the government announcement submitted by Loris-Melikov.

"Undoubtedly," writes Witte, "the establishment of such a purely advisory commission did not yet establish a constitution," but, he continues, it can hardly be denied that it represented a step forward (following the reforms of the sixties) towards a constitution and towards nothing else. The author then repeats a statement contained in the foreign press to the effect that upon reading Loris-Melikov's Memorial, Alexander II exclaimed: "Why, this is the *États généraux*.... What is proposed to us is neither more nor less than the Assembly of Notables of Louis XVI."[36]

We would observe, on our part, that under certain circumstances the application of Loris-Melikov's proposal

might have been a step towards a constitution, but it might also not have been; everything depended on which prevailed —the pressure of the revolutionary party and the liberal public, or the counter-pressure of the very powerful, compact party of persisting supporters of the autocracy that were unscrupulous in the methods they employed. If, however, we speak, not of what might have happened, but of what actually did happen, then we must admit the indubitable fact that the government was *wavering*. Some members of the government were in favour of strenuously resisting the liberals, while others were in favour of making concessions. But—and this is particularly important—even the latter wavered, having no very definite programme and never rising above the level of scheming bureaucrats.

In his Memorandum, Witte writes:

"Count Loris-Melikov appeared to be afraid to look the affair straight in the face and to define his programme with precision; he continued the evasive policy—in another direction, it is true—that had been adopted by Count Valuyev towards the Zemstvo institutions.

"As even the legal press rightly pointed out at the time, the programme announced by Loris-Melikov was distinguished by its extreme vagueness. This vagueness is observed in all the Count's subsequent actions and pronouncements. On the one hand, he declared that the autocracy was 'separated from the people', that 'he looks to public support as the principal force...', and that he regarded the proposed reform 'not as something final, but merely as a first step', etc. On the other hand, the Count declared at the same time to the press representatives that 'the hopes aroused among the people are nothing but a visionary illusion...', and in his most humble Memorial to the Tsar, he stated categorically that a National Assembly would be 'a dangerous experiment of reverting to the past...', that the measure he proposed would not in any way restrict the powers of the autocracy, since it had nothing in common with Western constitutional forms. Generally speaking, as L. Tikhomirov has fitly remarked, the Memorial itself is distinguished by its wonderfully confused wording" (p. 117).

In his attitude towards the freedom *fighters* Loris-Melikov, that notorious hero of the "dictatorship of the heart",[37] displayed "a cruelty unparalleled, before or since, in ordering the execution of a seventeen year-old youth for a printed leaflet found in his possession. Loris-Melikov did not forget the most remote parts of Siberia, and he did everything to worsen the conditions of the exiles suffering for their propaganda" (V. Zasulich in *Sotsial-*

Demokrat,[38] No. 1, p. 84). In view of the government's wavering, only a force capable of earnest struggle could have secured a constitution; but such a force was lacking—the revolutionaries had exhausted themselves by their effort of March 1[39]; there was neither a broad movement nor a strong organisation of the working class, and the liberal public on this occasion again proved to be so politically immature that even after the assassination of Alexander II it restricted itself to the mere presentation of petitions. The Zemstvos, the municipalities, and the liberal press (*Poryadok*, *Strana*, *Golos**), all presented petitions. Particularly loyal, artful, and nebulous were the petitions of the liberal authors of memoranda, such as the Marquis of Velepolski, Professor Chicherin, and Professor Gradovsky. Witte's Memorandum reproduces their content from a pamphlet published in London,** *The Constitution of Count Loris-Melikov* (Free Russian Press Fund, London, 1893). Those authors invented ingenious devices for bringing the monarch to cross the Rubicon without his being aware of it". It stands to reason that all these cautious petitions and artful devices proved utterly useless without a revolutionary force, and the autocratic party triumphed—triumphed despite the fact that on March 8, 1881, a majority of the Council of Ministers (seven against five) had voted *in favour* of Loris-Melikov's proposal. (So the pamphlet has it; but Witte, who assiduously cites its authors, for some reason or other declares in his Memorandum: "It is not authentically known what happened at this meeting of March 8 and what it resulted in; it would be rash to rely upon the rumours that have reached the foreign press," p. 124). On April 29, 1881, the Manifesto on the reaffirmation and preservation of autocracy, described by Katkov as "manna from heaven", was promulgated.

---

* *Poryadok* (Order); *Strana* (The Country); *Golos* (The Voice).—*Ed.*

** As we have seen, the author of the Memorandum most carefully copies from illegal pamphlets and admits that "the underground press and the literary works published abroad quite correctly judged the position on this question from their point of view" (p. 91). The only thing original produced by this learned Russian "political-scientist" is a certain amount of raw material; he has had to borrow all the fundamental points of view regarding political questions in Russia from underground literature.

For the second time since the emancipation of the peasants the revolutionary tide was swept back, and following it and as a consequence of it, the liberal movement for a second time gave way to *reaction*, over which Russian progressive society, of course, raised bitter lamentations. We are past masters of the art of lamentation; we lament the tactlessness and self-assurance of revolutionaries in harassing the government; we lament the government's indecisiveness when, finding that it is not confronted by a real force, it makes pseudo-concessions and takes back with one hand what it has given with the other; we lament "the age without ideas and ideals", when the government, having settled scores with revolutionaries whom the people failed to support, hastens to make up for lost time and fortifies itself for a fresh onslaught.

IV

The epoch of the "dictatorship of the heart", as Loris-Melikov's ministry has been described, proved to our liberals that even the "constitutionalism" of one of the ministers, even of the Prime Minister, with the government wavering and the Council of Ministers approving "the first step towards reform" by a majority, still guarantees precisely nothing, if there is no serious social force capable of compelling the government to surrender. It is interesting to note also that the government of Alexander III did not show its fangs immediately upon the promulgation of the Manifesto reaffirming the autocracy, but found it necessary for a time to fool the "public". In employing the term "fool" the public, we do not suggest that the government adopted the Machiavellian scheme of some minister, notable, or other. It cannot be over-emphasised that the system of pseudo-concessions and of seemingly important steps "to meet" public opinion has become an integral part of the policy of every modern government, including the Russian, for the Russian Government has for many generations recognised the necessity of reckoning with public opinion in one way or another, and in the course of many generations has trained statesmen in the shrewd art of domestic diplomacy. Such a diplomat was Count Ignatyev, whose appointment to the Ministry of the Interior in place of Loris-Melikov was intended to cover the

government's retreat towards out and out reaction. More than once Ignatyev proved himself a demagogue and deceiver of the worst type, so much so that Witte reveals in his Memorandum not a little "police complacency" when he describes the period of his office as an "unsuccessful attempt to create a country with local self-government and with an autocratic tsar at its head". True, this is precisely the "formula" advanced at the time by I. S. Aksakov; it was utilised by the government for its manoeuvres and was assailed by Katkov, who proved conclusively that there is a necessary connection between local self-government and a constitution. But it would be short-sighted to attempt *to explain* the well-known tactics of the police government (tactics deriving from its very nature) by the prevalence of this or that political view at the given moment.

Ignatyev issued a circular, in which he promised that the government would "take urgent measures to introduce proper methods to secure, with the maximum of success, the active participation of local public figures in the execution of His Majesty's designs". The Zemstvos responded to this "call" by petitions pleading for the convocation of an assembly "of the elected representatives of the people" (from the memorandum of a member of the Cherepovets Zemstvo; the governor did not even permit the opinion of a member of the Kirillov Zemstvo to be published). The government instructed the governors to "take no further action" with regard to these petitions; "at the same time, measures were apparently taken to prevent other assemblies from submitting similar petitions". The notorious attempt was made to call a conference of "qualified people" hand-picked by the ministers (for the purpose of discussing questions of reducing land redemption payments,[40] regulating migration, reforming local government, etc.). "The work of the committees of experts evoked no sympathy among the public and, *notwithstanding all the precautionary measures*, even aroused a direct protest from the Zemstvos. Twelve Zemstvo Assemblies petitioned that Zemstvo representatives be invited to participate in legislative activity, not only on special occasions and by appointment from the government, but permanently and by election from the Zemstvos." An attempt by the Samara Zemstvo to adopt a similar motion was pre-

vented by the chairman, "after which the Assembly broke up in protest" (Dragomanov, op. cit., p. 29; Memorandum, p. 131). That Count Ignatyev *duped* the Zemstvos is apparent from the following fact: "Mr. Ustimovich, Marshal of the Poltava Nobility and author of the draft Constitutional Petition of 1879, openly declared in the Gubernia Assembly of Nobles that he had received *positive assurances* [*sic*!] from Count Ignatyev that the government would call upon the representatives of the country to take part in legislative activity" (Dragomanov, ibid.).

These frauds of Ignatyev crowned the work of covering up the government's transition to a decisively new policy, and not without good reason did D. A. Tolstoi, who on May 30, 1882, was appointed Minister of the Interior, earn the nickname "Minister of Struggle". Petitions from the Zemstvos even for the convening of some sort of private conferences were unceremoniously rejected. There was even a case of a government commission replacing a Zemstvo Board and banishing its members, on a complaint lodged by a governor against "the systematic opposition" of the Zemstvo (of Cherepovets). D. A. Tolstoi, a faithful disciple and follower of Katkov, went further and decided to "reform" the Zemstvo institutions. The idea underlying the reform (which, as we have seen, was confirmed by history) was that "the opposition to the government has strongly entrenched itself in the Zemstvos" (p. 139 of the Memorandum, dealing with the original plan for Zemstvo reform). D. A. Tolstoi planned to replace the Zemstvo Boards with bureaus subordinated to the governor and to make all decisions of the Zemstvo Assemblies subject to the governor's sanction. This would have been a truly "radical" reform; but it is extremely interesting to note that even this disciple of Katkov, this "Minister of Struggle", in the words of the Memorandum, "did not abandon the usual policy of the Ministry of the Interior towards the Zemstvo institutions. In the draft of his project, Tolstoi did not openly express his idea, actually to abolish the Zemstvos; on the pretext of correctly developing the principle of local self-government, he sought to preserve their external form, but, at the same time, deprive them of all internal substance". This cunning policy of "the fox tail" was still further supplemented and developed in the

Council of State, with the result that the Zemstvo Regulations of 1890 "proved to be another half-measure in the history of Zemstvo institutions. They did not abolish the Zemstvos, but rendered them featureless and colourless; they did not destroy their character as being representative of all social-estates, but they gave them a social-estate tinge; ... they did not convert the Zemstvo institutions into regular organs of the state, ... but increased the power of the governors over them ... and increased the governor's power of veto". "The Regulations of July 12, 1890, were, in keeping with their author's design, a step in the direction of abolishing the Zemstvo institutions, not a radical reform of Zemstvo local self-government."

The Memorandum goes on to state that this new "half-measure" did not remove the opposition to the government (it was, of course, impossible to remove the opposition to a reactionary government by intensifying that reaction), but merely drove *certain* of its manifestations below the surface. The opposition manifested itself, first, in the fact that certain anti-Zemstvo laws—if one may so term them—met with resistance and were not carried out *de facto*; it manifested itself, again, in constitutional (or, at all events, constitution-flavoured) petitions. Thus, the law of June 10, 1893, which tied up the Zemstvo medical service in a tangle of detailed regulations, met with the first-mentioned type of opposition. "The Zemstvo institutions put up a strenuous resistance to the Ministry of the Interior, which had to make a retreat. The Ministry was compelled to suspend the introduction of new regulations, already drafted, to reserve them for a complete collection of the laws, and to draft a fresh proposal on altogether different principles [i.e., principles more acceptable to the Zemstvos]." The Assessment of Real Estate Act of June 8, 1893, which similarly introduced the principle of regulation and restricted the rights of the Zemstvos in the assessment of rates, likewise gave rise to dissatisfaction, and in many cases "is not being applied in practice". The medical and statistical institutions established by the Zemstvos, which have brought considerable benefit to the population (as compared with the bureaucracy, of course), proved themselves of sufficient strength to paralyse the regulations drawn up in the chancelleries of St. Petersburg.

The second form of opposition also found expression in the new Zemstvo, in 1894, when the Zemstvo petitions to Nicholas II renewed very definitely their demand for the extension of local self-government and gave rise to the "celebrated" words about senseless dreaming.

To the horror of the ministers, the "political tendencies" of the Zemstvos did not disappear. The author of the Memorandum cites the bitter complaints of the Governor of Tver (from his report of 1898) over the "closely knit group of people of liberal views" which had concentrated the affairs of the gubernia Zemstvo entirely in its own hands. "From the same governor's report for 1895, it is apparent that the struggle against the Zemstvo opposition presents a difficult task for the local administration and that the marshals of the nobility, who officiate as chairmen at Zemstvo meetings, are sometimes called upon to display 'civic courage' [*sic*!] in carrying out the instructions contained in the confidential circulars of the Ministry of the Interior on matters in which the Zemstvo institutions must not interfere." It is further related how, at one of the meetings of the assembly, the gubernia Marshal of the Nobility turned over his post as chairman to the uyezd* Marshal (Tver), how the Tver Marshal in his turn passed it on to the Novy Torzhok Marshal, and how the Novy Torzhok Marshal also fell ill and handed over the post to the Staritsa Marshal. And so, even the marshals of the nobility flinch from carrying out police functions! "The law of 1890 [laments the author of the Memorandum] gave the Zemstvo a social-estate tinge, strengthened the government element in the assemblies, and appointed all the uyezd marshals of the nobility and rural superintendents[41] to the gubernia Zemstvo Assemblies, and the fact that these featureless, social-estate, bureaucratic Zemstvos continue nevertheless to betray political tendencies, is a matter that should be pondered.... Resistance has not been overcome; deep discontent and silent opposition undoubtedly exist, and will continue to exist until the Zemstvo representing all estates dies." Such is the last word in bureaucratic wisdom. If curtailed representation gives rise to discontent, then the abolition of every kind of representation

* See footnote to p. 36.—*Tr.*

will, by simple human logic, strengthen this discontent and opposition. Mr. Witte imagines, however, that if one of the institutions that bring at least a particle of discontent to the surface is closed down, the discontent will disappear. Perhaps you think that Witte proposes something as resolute as the abolition of the Zemstvo? Nothing of the kind. Although, for the sake of fine words, he condemns the policy of evasion, Witte himself has nothing else but this policy to propose; nor can he have, without shedding the skin of minister of the autocratic government. Witte mumbles arrant nonsense about a "third way"—neither bureaucratic domination nor local self-government, but an administrative reform which should "properly organise" the "participation of public elements in government institutions". It is easy to emit nonsense of this kind, but after all the experiments with "qualified people" no one will be deceived by it; it is only too obvious that *without a constitution* any "participation of public elements" will be a fiction, will mean the subordination of the public (or those "called" from the public) to the bureaucracy. While criticising a particular measure of the Ministry of the Interior (the establishment of Zemstvos in the outlying regions), Witte cannot suggest anything new on the general question he himself raises, but merely warms up the old methods—half-measures, pseudo-concessions, and promises of numerous benefits, none of which are fulfilled. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that on the general question of "the direction of domestic policy", Witte and Goremykin are at one, and that the controversy between them is merely a family quarrel, a feud within the clan. On the one hand, Witte hastens to declare, "I have never proposed nor do I now propose the abolition of Zemstvo institutions or any radical change in the present system ... under present conditions there can hardly be any talk of abolishing them [the existing Zemstvos]". Witte, "on his part, thinks that with the establishment of strong governmental authority in the localities, it will be possible to place greater confidence in the Zemstvos", etc. After establishing a strong local bureaucracy to counterbalance local self-government (i.e., rendering local self-government impotent), one can place greater "confidence" in it. The same old song! Mr. Witte fears only "institutions representing all

the social-estates"; he "did not have in mind the various corporations, societies, unions of the social-estates or trade unions and did not consider their activities to be dangerous to the autocracy". For example, in regard to the "village communes", Mr. Witte does not doubt in the least that in view of their "inertness" they are harmless to the autocracy. "The predominance of landownership relations and the interests connected with them develop spiritual peculiarities in the rural population which render it indifferent to anything outside the politics of the village pump.... Our peasants at village meetings concern themselves with the apportioning of taxes, ... the distribution of allotments, etc. Moreover, they are illiterate or semi-literate—*what sort of politics then can they concern themselves with*?" Mr. Witte is extremely sober-minded, as you see. In regard to the unions of social-estates he declares that from the point of view of the danger they represent to the central government "their diversity of interests is of great importance. The government, by taking advantage of this diversity of interests, can always find support in one social-estate and play it off against the political claims of the others". Witte's programme of "properly organised participation of public elements in government institutions" is nothing but another of the innumerable attempts of the police state to "split" the population.

On the other hand, Mr. Goremykin, with whom Mr. Witte enters into such heated controversy, himself carries out this very systematic policy of disunity and persecution. He argues (in his Memorandum, to which Witte rejoins) that it is necessary to institute new offices to supervise the Zemstvo; he is opposed to permitting even simple local congresses of Zemstvo civil servants; he stands whole-heartedly for the Regulations of 1890—that step towards the abolition of the Zemstvos; he fears the effort of the Zemstvos to include "tendentious questions" in their programme of assessment work; he fears Zemstvo statistics generally; he is in favour of taking the elementary schools out of the hands of the Zemstvos and placing them under the control of government institutions; he argues that the Zemstvos are incapable of handling the questions connected with the food supply (Zemstvo workers, don't you see, encourage "exaggerated notions of the extent of the disaster and the needs of the

famine-stricken population"!!); and he defends the fixing of limits to Zemstvo taxation, "in order to protect landed property from excessive increases in Zemstvo taxes". Witte is entirely right, therefore, when he says: "The entire policy of the Ministry of the Interior towards the Zemstvos consists in slowly but steadily undermining their organs, weakening their significance, and concentrating their functions in the hands of government institutions. It may be said without the slightest exaggeration that when the 'recently adopted measures' referred to in the Memorandum [Goremykin's] 'regulating the various branches of Zemstvo work and administration' are brought to a successful conclusion, we shall have no local self-government whatever. All that will be left of the Zemstvo institutions will be a mere idea and a shell without any real content." Consequently, the policy of Goremykin (and more so the policy of Sipyagin) and of Witte lead to the same goal, and the controversy over the question of the Zemstvo and constitutionalism is, we repeat, nothing more than a family quarrel. Lovers' tiffs are easily made up again. The "fight" between Mr. Witte and Mr. Goremykin is nothing more serious than that. As for our own views on the general question of the autocracy and the Zemstvos, it will be more convenient to present them in the process of analysing the preface written by R. N. S.*

V

Mr. R. N. S.'s preface represents much that is of interest. It touches upon the broadest questions of political reforms in Russia, the various methods by which these reforms can be effected, and the significance of the various forces leading to these reforms. On the other hand, Mr. R. N. S., who apparently has close relations with liberal circles generally, and Zemstvo liberal circles in particular, undoubtedly sounds a new note in the chorus of our "underground" literature. Therefore, in order to clear up the question of the political significance of the Zemstvos in principle and to acquaint ourselves with the tendencies and, I shall not say directions,

* A *nom de plume* used by Mr. Struve. (Author's comment to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

but moods, in the circles close to the liberals, it will be well worth our while to deal in detail with this preface and determine whether that which is new in it is positive or negative, and to what extent it is positive and to what extent negative and why.

The fundamental feature of R. N. S.'s views is the following. As can be seen from numerous passages of his essay, quoted below, he favours peaceful, gradual, and strictly legal development. On the other hand, he rebels with all his being against the autocracy and yearns for political freedom. But the autocracy is an autocracy precisely because it prohibits and persecutes *all* "development" towards freedom. This contradiction permeates the whole of R. N. S.'s essay and renders his argumentation extremely illogical, hesitant, and unsound. Constitutionalism can be combined with solicitude for the strictly legal development of autocratic Russia only on the premise or, at least, on the assumption that the autocratic government *itself* will understand, grow weary, yield, etc. And Mr. R. N. S. does, indeed, at times fall from the height of his civic indignation to the vulgar viewpoint of the most immature liberalism. Thus, he says of himself: "... we who regard the struggle for civil liberties waged by politically conscious people in Russia today to be their vow of Hannibal, a vow as sacred as that taken by the men and women who fought for the emancipation of the peasants in the forties" ... and, again, "however trying it is to those of us who have taken the 'vow of Hannibal' to fight against the autocracy", etc. Well said, powerfully said! Powerful words like these would have been an embellishment to the article, if the same spirit of indomitable and irreconcilable struggle ("the vow of Hannibal") had pervaded it throughout. But these powerful words, precisely because they are so powerful, sound discordant when accompanied by a note of artificial conciliation and pacification, by an attempt to introduce, even with the aid of far-fetched interpretations, the conception of peaceful, strictly legal development. Mr. R. N. S., unfortunately, evinces more than enough such notes and such attempts. He devotes a page and a half, for instance, to a detailed "argumentation" of the idea that "the policy of the state during the reign of Nicholas II deserves *even severer* [our italics] condemnation from

the moral and political points of view than the wicked revision of the reforms of Alexander II carried out during the reign of Alexander III". Why *severer* condemnation? It appears that this is because Alexander III fought against revolution, while Nicholas II fought against "the legal aspirations of Russian society"; the former fought against politically conscious forces, the latter against "quite peaceful social forces often acting without any clear political idea" ("hardly even realising that their purposive cultural work was undermining the state system"). To a considerable degree this is untrue in point of fact, as we shall show further on. But apart from this, one cannot help noting the author's peculiar line of reasoning. He condemns autocracy, but condemns one autocrat *more* than another, not because of policy, for that has remained unchanged, but because he (allegedly) has no "hotheads" to contend with, such as "naturally" call forth sharp resistance, and, consequently, he has no occasion for persecutions. Is not such an argument an obvious concession to the loyal and humble contention that Our Father the Tsar need not fear to call together his beloved people because they have never dreamed of anything beyond the bounds of peaceful strivings and strict legality? We are not surprised to find such a "train of thought" (or train of lies) in the works of Mr. Witte, who writes in his Memorandum: "One would suppose, when there are no political parties and there is no revolution, and when the rights of the supreme authority are not being challenged, that the administration should not be contraposed to the people or society...",* etc. We are not surprised to meet with such arguments in the writings of Mr. Chicherin, who, in the Memorandum presented to Count Milyutin after March 1, 1881, declared that "the authorities must first of all display their energy and show that they have not lowered their nag in the face of danger", that "the monarchical system is compatible with free institutions only when the latter are the fruit of peaceful development and the calm initiative of the supreme authority itself", and who recommended the

* P. 205. "This is even silly," observes R. N. S. in a footnote to this passage. Quite so. But is not R. N. S.'s reasoning on pp. xi-xii of his preface, cited above, moulded from the same clay?

establishment of a "strong and liberal" government functioning with the aid of a "legislative organ strengthened and renovated by the elective element".* Now, it would be quite natural for such a Mr. Chicherin to acknowledge that the policy of Nicholas II deserves greater condemnation, *because* under his rule peaceful development and the calm initiative of the supreme authority itself *could have led* to free institutions. But is it natural and decent to hear such reasoning from a man who took the vow of Hannibal to struggle?

Mr. R. N. S. is wrong in point of fact. "Now," he says, comparing the present reign with the preceding one, "no one thinks seriously of the violent overthrow wishfully imagined by the adherents of Narodnaya Volya." *Parlez pour vous, monsieur!* Speak only for yourself. We know quite definitely that the revolutionary movement in Russia, far from having died out or subsided in the present as compared with the previous reign, has, on the contrary, revived and become many times stronger. What kind of "revolutionary" movement would it be, if none of the participants thought seriously of a violent change? The objection may be raised that in the quoted lines Mr. R. N. S. has in mind, not violent revolution in general, but a specific "Narodnaya Volya" revolution, i.e., a revolution that will be both political and social at the same time, a revolution that will lead, not only to the overthrow of the autocracy, but to the seizure of power. Such an objection, however, would be groundless, first, because to the autocracy as such (i.e., to the autocratic government and not to the "bourgeoisie" or "society") it is not important *for what reason* people want to overthrow it; important is *the fact* that they want to overthrow it. Secondly, at the beginning of the reign of Alexander III, the Narodnaya Volya adherents "presented" to the government the very alternative that Social-Democracy now presents to Nicholas II—either revolutionary struggle or the renunciation of autocratic power. (See the Letter of the Executive Committee of Narodnaya Volya to Alexander III, dated March 10, 1881, which put forward two conditions: (1) a general amnesty for all political offenders, and (2) the

* Witte's Memorandum, pp. 122-23. *The Constitution of Count Loris-Melikov*, p. 24.

convening of an assembly of representatives of the entire Russian people on the basis of universal suffrage, freedom of the press, speech, and assembly.) Mr. R. N. S. himself knows perfectly well that many people, not only among the intelligentsia, but also among the working class, "think seriously" about a violent revolution; see page xxxix et seq. of his essay, where reference is made to "revolutionary Social-Democracy", which possesses a "mass basis and intellectual forces", which is advancing towards "the decisive political struggle", towards the "sanguinary struggle of revolutionary Russia against the absolutist-bureaucratic regime" (p. xli). There is not the slightest doubt, therefore, that Mr. R. N. S.'s "loyal speeches" constitute a special method, an attempt to influence the government (or "public opinion") by demonstrating his (or other people's) modesty.

Mr. R. N. S., by the way, thinks that the term "struggle" may be given a very wide interpretation. "The abolition of the Zemstvo," he writes, "will place a trump card in the hands of revolutionary propagandists—we say this quite objectively [*sic*!], without, on the one hand, experiencing repulsion against what is usually termed revolutionary action, or, on the other, being carried away with infatuation or admiration for this form [*sic*!] of struggle for political and social progress." This is a most remarkable tirade. If we remove the quasi-scientific formula, this inappropriate parading of "objectivity" (since the author himself mentions his preference for one or another form of activity or of struggle, the protestation of his objectivity rates in value with the statement, two and two equal one stearin candle), we shall find the hoary argument: Gentlemen of the government, you may believe me when I begin to scare you with revolution, because my heart is not in it. His reference to objectivity is nothing more nor less than a fig-leaf intended to conceal subjective antipathy to revolution and revolutionary activity. And Mr. R. N. S. stands in need of a fig-leaf, because such antipathy is totally incompatible with the vow of Hannibal.

By the way, are we not making a mistake about this Hannibal? Did he really take a vow to struggle against the Romans, or only to fight for the progress of Carthage, which progress, of course, in the final analysis, would be to the in-

jury of Rome? Can the term "struggle" be understood otherwise than in its "narrow" meaning? Mr. R. N. S. thinks it can. A comparison of the vow of Hannibal with the above-mentioned tirade yields the conclusion that struggle against the autocracy manifests itself in various "forms": one form is the revolutionary, illegal struggle; another form is "struggle for political and social progress" in general, in other words peaceful legal activity, which disseminates culture within the limits permitted by the autocracy. We do not doubt in the least that it is possible even under the autocracy to carry on legal activity which promotes Russian progress, in some cases fairly rapid technological progress, in a few cases insignificant social progress, and, in exceptional cases, political progress to a very slight extent. We may argue about the magnitude of this slight progress and the extent to which it is possible, the extent to which isolated cases of such progress are capable of paralysing the mass political demoralisation which the autocracy is constantly sowing among the population everywhere. But to include, even indirectly, peaceful legal activity in the conception of struggle against the autocracy means to facilitate this work of demoralisation and to weaken the as it is infinitely weak consciousness of the Russian man in the street of his responsibility as citizen for *everything* the government does.

Unfortunately, Mr. R. N. S. is not alone among the illegal writers who seek to obliterate the difference between revolutionary struggle and peaceful uplift activities. He has a predecessor in the person of R. M., author of the article "Our Reality", published in the celebrated "*Separate Supplement*" *to Rabochaya Mysl*[42] (September 1899). In his controversy with the Social-Democratic revolutionaries, Mr. R. M. wrote: "The struggle for the Zemstvo and for municipal seIf-government, the struggle for public schools, the struggle for public courts, the struggle for public aid to the famine-stricken population, etc., all represent the struggle against the autocracy.... This social struggle, which for some unexplained reason fails to attract the favourable interest of many Russian revolutionary writers, is, as we have seen, being waged by Russian society, and not only since yesterday.... The question now is how these separate social strata ... can wage the struggle against the autocracy most effectively....

The principal question for us is how this social struggle against the autocracy should be waged by our workers, whose movement our revolutionaries regard as the best means of overthrowing the autocracy" (pp. 8-9). As can be seen, Mr. R. M. does not bother to conceal his antipathy towards the revolutionaries; he openly characterises legal opposition and peaceful activity as struggle against the autocracy, and the most important question for him is how the workers should conduct *this* struggle. Mr. R. N. S. is not nearly so crude and open, but the kinship between the political trends of this liberal and of the ardent worshipper of the labour movement pure and simple, is very definitely apparent.*

With respect to Mr. R. N. S.'s "objectivity", we must say that he sometimes simply casts it aside. He is "objective" when he speaks of the working-class movement, of its organic growth, of the future inevitable struggles between revolutionary Social-Democracy and the autocracy, and when he states that the abolition of the Zemstvos will inevitably force the liberals to organise an illegal party. All this is set forth in a very business-like and sober manner, so sober indeed that one can only rejoice that the working-class movement in Russia is so well understood in liberal circles. But when, instead of fighting the enemy, Mr. R. N. S. begins to talk about the possibility of "submission" on the part of the enemy, he forfeits his "objectivity", gives expression to his real sentiments, and even passes from the indicative mood to the imperative.

"Only in the event of people being found among those in power courageous enough to submit to history and to compel the autocrat to

* "The economic organisations of the workers," says Mr. R. N. S. in another passage, "will serve as a school for the real political education of the working masses." We would advise our author to be more careful in employing the term "real", which has been worn thin by the knights of opportunism. It cannot be denied that under certain conditions their economic organisations may help the workers very considerably in their political training (no more than it can be denied that under other circumstances they may help in their political demoralisation). But the masses of the workers can obtain *real* political training only by their participation in all aspects of the revolutionary movement, including open street fighting and civil war against the defenders of political and economic slavery.

submit to it will the final and bloody struggle between revolutionary Russia and the autocratic-bureaucratic regime be avoided.... No doubt there are men among the higher bureaucracy who do not sympathise with the reactionary policy.... These men, the only persons having access to the throne, never dare to express their convictions openly.... Perhaps the enormous shadow of the inevitable, historic day of retribution, the shadow of great events, will cause the government circles to waver and will destroy the iron system of reactionary policy while there is yet time. Comparatively little is required for this now.... Perhaps it [the government] will realise, before it is too late, the fatal danger of protecting the autocratic regime at all costs. Perhaps even before it has to face revolution, it will grow weary of its struggle against the natural and historically necessary development of freedom, and will waver in its 'irreconcilable' policy. If it ceases to be consistent in its struggle against freedom, it will be obliged to open the door wider and wider for it. It maybe ... no, not only may be, but *so shall it be*!" (Author's italics).

Amen! is all that we need add to this well-intentioned and lofty monologue. Our Hannibal makes such rapid progress that he now appears before us in a third form. The first was the struggle against the autocracy, the second—the spreading of culture, the third—appeals to the enemy to submit and attempts to frighten him with a "shadow". How frightful! We quite agree with our respected Mr. R. N. S. that the sanctimonious hypocrites of the Russian Government are sooner frightened by "shadows" than by anything else on earth. Immediately prior to conjuring up shadows, our author, in referring to the growth of the revolutionary forces and to the impending revolutionary outbreak, exclaimed: "We foresee with profound sorrow the horrible price in people and in cultural forces that will have to be paid for this madly aggressive, conservative policy which has neither political sense nor a shadow of moral justification." What a bottomless pit of doctrinairism and unction is revealed by this conclusion to an argument about the revolutionary outbreak! The author fails completely to understand the enormous historical significance it would have, if, for once at least, the people of Russia taught the government a good lesson. Instead of showing the "horrible price" the people have paid and are still paying to absolutism, in order to arouse their hatred and indignation and instil in them a readiness and a passion for struggle, you talk about *future* sacrifices in order to frighten people away

from the struggle. My good gentlemen! It would be far better for you to refrain altogether from talking about the "revolutionary outbreak" than to ruin your reasoning with such a finale. Apparently, you do not wish *to create* "great events", you merely want to talk about "the shadow of great events", and then only with "persons having access to the throne".

Our legal press, as we know, is chock-full of such talk with shadows and about shadows; and in order to give substance to the shadows, it has become fashionable to refer to the "great reforms" and to sing to them hallelujahs full of conventional lies. An author writing under the surveillance of the censor may sometimes be forgiven such lies, since otherwise he would never be able to express his striving for political reforms. But no censorship hovered over Mr. R. N. S. He writes, "The great reforms were not devised for the greater triumph of the bureaucracy." How evasive this apologetic phrase is. *By whom* "devised"? By Herzen, Chernyshevsky, Unkovsky, and those who marched with them? But these people demanded ever so much more than was effected by the "reforms", and because of this they were persecuted by the government that introduced the "great" reforms. By the government and by those who followed it blindly singing its praises and snarling at the "hotheads"? But the government strove by every means in its power to concede as little as possible, and to curtail the democratic demands *precisely* for the "greater triumph of the bureaucracy". Mr. R. N. S. is well aware of these historical facts, and he obscures them only for the reason that they entirely refute his smug theory of the possible "submission" of the autocrat. There is no place for submissiveness in politics, and the time-honoured police method of *divide et impera*, divide and rule, yield the unimportant in order to preserve the essential, give with one hand and take back with the other, can be mistaken for submission only out of unbounded simplicity (both sacred and sly simplicity). "... When the government of Alexander II devised and introduced the 'great reforms', it did not at the same time deliberately set itself the aim of cutting off imperatively all the Russian people's legal roads to political liberty, it did not weigh its every step and every paragraph of the

law with this end in view." This is *untrue*! The government of Alexander II, both in "devising" the reforms and in introducing them, set out from the very beginning to reject the demands for political freedom then put forward. From the beginning to the end it cut off every legal road to liberty; for it answered even simple appeals with repressions, it never even permitted liberty to be discussed freely. Suffice it to recall the facts mentioned in Witte's Memorandum, quoted above, to refute Mr. R. N. S.'s paeans of praise. Concerning the persons in the government of Alexander II, Witte expresses himself, for example, as follows: "It must be observed that the prominent statesmen of the sixties, whose celebrated names will be preserved by a grateful posterity, in their time did more that is great than anything their successors may have done; they toiled at the renovation of our state and social system from sincere conviction, not to frustrate the strivings of their ruler, but out of unbounded loyalty to him" (p. 67 of the Memorandum). What is true is true—from sincere conviction, out of unbounded loyalty to the ruler at the head of the police gang....

After this we are not surprised that Mr. R. N. S. says very little about the most important question of the role of the Zemstvos in the struggle for political liberty. Apart from the usual references to the "practical" and "cultural" work of the Zemstvo, he mentions in passing its "educational-political significance"; he says that the "Zemstvo has political significance", that the Zemstvo, as Mr. Witte clearly sees, "is dangerous [to the present system] only by virtue of the historical tendency of its development—as the embryo of a constitution". And, concluding these seemingly casual remarks, comes the following attack upon revolutionaries: "We value Mr. Witte's work, not only for the truth it tells about the autocracy, but also as a valuable political testimonial to the Zemstvo granted by the bureaucracy itself. This testimonial is an excellent reply to all those who, being devoid of political education or carried away by revolutionary phrases [*sic*!], have refused to see the enormous political significance of the Russian Zemstvos and their legal cultural activity." Who has revealed a lack of education? Who is carried away? Where and when? With whom does Mr. R. N. S. disagree? And why? To these ques-

tions no reply is forthcoming, and our author's attack is nothing but an expression of his antipathy towards revolutionaries, which we know from other passages in his essay. Matters are not clarified by the still stranger comment: "By these words we do not desire [?!] to offend revolutionaries whose moral courage in the struggle against tyranny cannot be too highly estimated." Wherefore this remark? What connection is there between moral courage and inability to appreciate the Zemstvos? Mr. R. N. S. has indeed fallen out of the frying-pan into the fire. First he "offended" the revolutionaries by making an unsupported and "anonymous" (i.e., not known against whom levelled) charge of ignorance and phrase-mongering, and now he commits a fresh "offence" against them by assuming that they can be induced to swallow the charge of ignorance if the pill is sweetened by recognition of their moral courage. To complete the confusion, Mr. R. N. S. contradicts himself by declaring, in chorus, as it were, with those who are "carried away by revolutionary phrases", that "the modern Russian Zemstvo ... is not a political magnitude that could impress or overawe anyone by its own direct power.... It can barely maintain its own position".... "Only in the remote future and only as a result of the cultural development of the whole country could such institutions [as the Zemstvo] ... become a menace to this [absolutist] system."

VI

Let us, however, try to analyse the issue on which Mr. R. N. S. speaks so angrily and emptily. The facts we have cited above show that the "political significance" of the Zemstvos., i.e., their significance as a factor in the struggle for political freedom, lies principally in the following: first, these bodies of representatives of our propertied classes (particularly the landed aristocracy) forever contrapose elected institutions to the bureaucracy, give rise to constant conflicts between them, expose at every step the reactionary character of the irresponsible tsarist officialdom, and foster discontent and opposition to the autocratic govern-

ment.* Secondly, the Zemstvos, attached to the bureaucratic chariot like a superfluous fifth wheel, strive to consolidate their position, to increase their significance, and to obtain a constitution by petitioning—"unconsciously march towards it", as Witte himself puts the matter. For that reason they are unsuitable as allies of the government in its fight against the revolutionaries; they maintain a benevolent neutrality towards the latter and render them undoubted, if indirect, service by causing the government to waver in its measures of repression at critical moments. Of course, institutions, which hitherto have proved that they are, at best, capable of making only liberal petitions and maintaining benevolent neutrality, cannot be regarded as an "important", or to any degree an independent, factor in the political struggle; but it cannot be denied that the Zemstvos represent one of the *auxiliary* factors in the struggle. In this sense we are even prepared, if you will, to regard the Zemstvo as a piece of constitution. Perhaps the reader will say, "Then you agree with Mr. R. N. S., who does not claim any more for them?" Not at all. It is only here that our difference with him begins.

Let us admit for the sake of argument that the Zemstvo is a piece of constitution. But it is precisely such a piece that was used *to decoy* Russian "society" away from a constitution. It is precisely such a relatively unimportant position that the autocracy has yielded to growing democracy in order to retain its hold on its principal positions, in order to divide and disunite those who demanded political reforms. We have seen how this policy of disuniting on the basis of "confidence" in the Zemstvo ("the embryo of a constitution") succeeded in the sixties and in the years 1880-81. The question of the relation of the Zemstvos to political freedom is a particular case of the general question of the relation of reforms to revolution. This particular case serves to illustrate the narrow-mindedness and stupidity of the fashionable theory of Bernstein,[43] which substitutes reforms for revolutionary struggle and declares (e.g.,

* See the extremely detailed treatment of this aspect of the question in the pamphlet by P. B. Axelrod, *The Historical Position and the Mutual Relations between Liberal and Socialist Democracy in Russia*, Geneva, 1898. See particularly pp. 5, 8, 11-12, 17-19.

through the mouth of Mr. Berdyaev) that the "principle of progress is that the better things are, the better". This principle in its general form is as untrue as its reverse that the worse things are, the better. Revolutionaries, of course, will never reject the struggle for reforms, the struggle to capture even minor and unimportant enemy positions, *if* these will serve to strengthen the attack and help to achieve full victory. But they will never forget that sometimes the enemy himself surrenders a certain position in order to disunite the attacking party and thus to defeat it more easily. They will never forget that only by constantly having the "ultimate aim" in view, only by appraising every step of the "movement" and every reform from the point of view of the general revolutionary struggle, is it possible to guard the movement against false steps and shameful mistakes.

It is this aspect of the question—the significance of the Zemstvo as an instrument for *strengthening* the autocracy through half-concessions, as a means of bringing over a certain section of the liberals to the side of the autocracy—that Mr. R. N. S. has completely failed to understand. He has preferred to invent for his own use a doctrinaire scheme by which the Zemstvos and the constitution are connected by the straight-line "formula", the better things are, the better. "If you first abolish the Zemstvos in Russia," he says, addressing himself to Witte, "and then increase the rights of the individual, you will lose the good opportunity of giving the country a moderate constitution growing historically out of local self-government with a social-estate appearance. At all events you will render the cause of conservatism a distinct disservice." What a beautiful and harmonious conception! Local self-government with a social-estate tinge—a wise conservative, having access to the throne—a moderate constitution. The unfortunate thing about it is that in actual practice, the wise conservatives have on more than one occasion, thanks to the Zemstvos, found "good opportunities" *to withhold* the constitution from the country.

Mr. R. N. S.'s peaceful "conception" had its effect also on the slogan with which he concludes his essay and which is printed in the manner of a slogan, as a separate line and

in heavy type: "Rights, and an Authoritative All-Russian Zemstvo!" It must be frankly acknowledged that this is the same sort of indecent flirting with the political prejudices of the broad masses of Russian liberals as *Rabochaya Mysl*'s flirting with the political prejudices of the broad masses of the workers. We are duty-bound to raise a protest in the first as in the second case against such flirting. It is prejudice to believe that the government of Alexander II did not cut off the legal road to liberty, that the Zemstvos provide a good opportunity for granting a moderate constitution to the country, and that the slogan, "Rights, and an Authoritative Zemstvo" can serve as the banner of, we shall not say the revolutionary, but even the constitutional, movement. This is not a banner that can serve to distinguish enemies from allies, or help to direct and guide the movement; it is but a rag that can only help the most unreliable characters to creep into the movement, and assist the government to make still another attempt to come off with high-sounding promises and indesisive reforms. One need not be a prophet to be able to prophesy this. Our revolutionary movement will reach its apogee, the liberal ferment in society will increase tenfold, and other Loris-Melikovs and Ignatyevs will appear in the government and inscribe on their banner: "Rights, and an Authoritative Zemstvo". But if it came to pass, it would be the most unfavourable outcome for Russia and the most favourable for the government. If any considerable section of the liberals put their faith in that banner, and, allowing themselves to be carried away by it, attack the revolutionary "hotheads" in the rear, the latter may find themselves cut off, and the government will try to restrict itself to a minimum of concessions limited to something in the nature of an advisory and aristocratic constitution. Whether this attempt will be successful or not, depends upon the outcome of the decisive struggle between the revolutionary proletariat and the government; but of one thing we may be certain—the liberals will be betrayed. With the aid of slogans like those advanced by Mr. R. N. S. ("Authoritative Zemstvo", etc.), the government will decoy them like puppies away from the revolutionaries, only to take them by the scruff of the neck and thrash them with the whip

of reaction. And when that happens, gentlemen, we will not forget to say, *Serves you right*!

Why, instead of a demand for the abolition of absolutism, is such a moderate and chastened wish put forward as ultimate slogan? First, for the sake of the philistine doctrinairism that desires to render a "service to conservatism" and believes that the government will be softened by such moderation and be rendered "submissive" by it. Secondly, in order to "unite the liberals". Indeed, the slogan "Rights, and an Authoritative Zemstvo" can perhaps serve to unite *all* liberals in the same way as (in the opinion of the "Economists") the slogan "add a kopek to each ruble"* will unite *all* the workers. But will not *such* unity be a loss rather than a gain? Unity is an advantage when it raises those who are united to the level of the class-conscious and decisive programme of the unifying force. Unity is a disadvantage when it lowers the unifying force to the level of the prejudices of the masses. Among Russian liberals there is undoubtedly a widespread prejudice that the Zemstvo is indeed the "embryo of a constitution",** the "natural", peaceful, and gradual growth of which is accidentally retarded

* I.e., a one per cent wage increase.—*Tr.*

** As to what may be expected from the Zemstvo, it may not be without interest to quote the following opinion expressed by Prince P. V. Dolgorukov in his *Listok*[44] published in the sixties (Burtsev, op. cit., pp. 64-67): "In examining the main regulations governing the Zemstvo institutions, we again come across the selfsame secret thought of the government, which continually breaks out into the light, viz., to overwhelm with generosity, to proclaim loudly, 'See how much I am giving you!'— yet to give as little as possible, and even to impose restrictions upon the enjoyment of the little that is given.... Under the present autocratic system, the Zemstvo institutions do not and cannot bring any benefits, and will not and cannot have any significance, but they are rich in the seeds of fruitful development in the future.... New Zemstvo institutions may well be destined to serve as the basis for the future constitutional order in Russia.... But as long as Russia lacks a constitutional system of government, as long as the autocracy exists, and as long as freedom of the press is denied, the Zemstvo institutions will be doomed to remain political phantoms, *mute* assemblies of those who should voice the interests of the people." Thus, even in the sixties, Dolgorukov was not very optimistic. The forty years that have passed since then have taught us much and have demonstrated that the Zemstvos were destined by "fate" (and partly by the government) to serve as the basis for a series of measures *to overwhelm* the constitutionalists.

by the intrigues of certain immoral time-servers, that only a few petitions are necessary in order to bring the autocrat to "submission", that legal cultural work generally and Zemstvo work in particular have "considerable political significance", relieving those who mouth verbal hostility to the autocracy of the obligation actively to support the revolutionary struggle against the autocracy in one way or another, and so forth, and so on. Undoubtedly, it would be very useful and desirable to unite the liberals; but the unity must be one whose purpose is to combat outworn prejudices and not to play up to them, to raise the general level of our political development (or rather underdevelopment), and not to sanction it—in a word, it must be a unity for the purpose of supporting the illegal struggle and not for the purpose of opportunistic phrase-mongering about the great political significance of legal activity. If there can be no justification for issuing to the workers the political slogan "Freedom to Strike", etc., then, by the same token, there can be no justification for issuing to the liberals the slogan "An Authoritative Zemstvo". *Under the autocracy* every kind of Zemstvo, however "authoritative" it may be, will inevitably be a deformity, incapable of development, while *under a constitution* the Zemstvo will immediately lose its present-day "political" significance.

The unification of liberals is possible in two ways: by forming an independent liberal party (illegal, of course), or by organising liberal aid for revolutionaries. Mr. R. N. S. himself points to the first form, but ... if what he says in this connection is to be taken as a genuine expression of the views and prospects of liberalism, then it does not give grounds for very great optimism. He writes: "Without a Zemstvo, the Zemstvo liberals will have to form a liberal party or abandon the historical stage as an organised force. We are convinced that the organisation of liberals in an illegal party, even if its programme and its methods are very moderate, will be the inevitable result of the abolition of the Zemstvo." If that is the case, we shall have to wait a long time, for even Witte does not wish to abolish the Zemstvos, and as for the Russian Government it is very much concerned with preserving their outward form, even if their content is completely eliminated. That a liberal

party will be a very moderate one is quite natural, and it is useless to expect that the movement among the bourgeoisie (for only on that movement can a liberal party be based) will give rise to any other. But what should be the activities and the "methods" of such a party? Mr. R. N. S. does not explain. He says: "An illegal liberal party, being an organisation consisting of the most moderate and least mobile of the opposition elements, cannot by itself develop a particularly extensive, or particularly intensive, activity...." We think, however, that in a certain sphere, although limited by local and above all by Zemstvo interests, the liberal party could very well develop an extensive and intensive activity, such as the organisation of political exposures.... "But with such activity on the part of other parties, especially the Social-Democratic or working-class party, the liberal party, even without entering into any direct agreement with the Social-Democrats, can become a highly important factor...." Very true; and the reader will naturally expect that the author would, at least in general outline, describe the work of this "factor". But instead of doing so, Mr. R. N. S. describes the growth of revolutionary Social-Democracy and concludes: "With the existence of a pronounced political movement ... a liberal opposition, if it is in the least organised, can play an important political role; with proper tactics, a moderate party always stands to gain from an accentuated struggle between extreme social elements...." That is all! The "role" of the "factor" (which has already managed to convert itself from a party into an "opposition") is to "take advantage" of the growing acuteness of the struggle. Mention is made of what the liberals stand to gain, but not a word is said about the liberals taking part in the struggle. The slip of the tongue, one may say, is providential....

The Russian Social-Democrats never closed their eyes to the fact that the political liberties for which they are first and foremost fighting will benefit *primarily* the bourgeoisie. Only a socialist steeped in the worst prejudices of utopianism, or reactionary Narodism, would for that reason object to carrying on the struggle against the autocracy. The bourgeoisie will benefit by these liberties and rest on its laurels—the proletariat, however, must have freedom

in order to develop the struggle for socialism to the utmost. And Social-Democracy will persistently carry on the struggle for liberation, regardless of the attitude of the various strata of the bourgeoisie towards it. In the interests of the political struggle, we must support every opposition to the oppressive autocracy, no matter on what grounds and in what social stratum it manifests itself. For that reason, we are by no means indifferent to the opposition expressed by our liberal bourgeoisie in general, and by our Zemstvo liberals in particular. If the liberals succeed in organising themselves in an illegal party, so much the better. We shall welcome the growth of political consciousness among the propertied classes; we will support their demands, we will endeavour to work so that the activities of the liberals and the Social-Democrats mutually supplement each other.* But even if they fail to do so (which is more probable), we shall not give them up as lost, we will endeavour to strengthen contacts with individual liberals, acquaint them with our movement, support them by exposing in the labour press all the despicable acts of the government and the local authorities, and try to induce them to support the revolutionaries. Such an exchange of services between liberals and Social-Democrats is already proceeding; it must be extended and made permanent. But while always ready to carry on this exchange of services, we will never, under any circumstances, cease to carry on a determined struggle against the illusions that are so widespread in the politically undeveloped Russian society generally and among Russian liberals in particular. Paraphrasing the celebrated statement of Marx in regard to the Revolution of 1848, we may say of the Russian revolutionary movement that its progress lies, not so much in the achievement of any positive gains, as in emancipation from harmful illusions.[46]

* The present writer had occasion to point out the utility of a liberal party four years ago, in commenting upon the Narodnoye Pravo Party.[45] See *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats* (Geneva, 1898, p. 26): "... If, however, the party [Narodnoye Pravo] also contains not masquerade, but real non-socialist politicians, non-socialist democrats, then this party can do no little good by striving to draw closer to the political opposition among our bourgeoisie...." (See present edition, Vol. 2, p. 345.—*Ed.*)

We have emancipated ourselves from the illusions of anarchism and Narodnik socialism, from contempt for politics, from the belief in the exceptionalist development of Russia, from the conviction that the people are ready for revolution, and from the theory of the seizure of power and the duel-like combat between the autocracy and the heroic intelligentsia.

It is time our liberals emancipated themselves from the illusion, theoretically untenable, one might assume, yet very tenacious in practice, that it is still possible to hold parley with the Russian autocracy, that some kind of Zemstvo is the embryo of a constitution, and that the sincere adherents of the constitution can fulfil their vow of Hannibal by patient legal activity and by patient appeals to the enemy to turn submissive.

A VALUABLE ADMISSION

Labour unrest has once again been the subject of intense and widespread comment. The governing circles are alarmed, in all earnestness alarmed. This is evident from the fact that it was deemed necessary to "punish", by suspension for a week, even *Novoye Vremya*,[47] that arch-loyal newspaper ever fawning on the authorities, for an article published in issue No. 9051 of May 11, entitled "Apropos of the Labour Unrest". Of course, the penalty was not inflicted because of the contents of the article, which was replete with the warmest appreciation of the government and the sincerest concern for its interests. What was considered dangerous was the very discussion of events that were "disturbing society", the mere reference to their extensiveness and their importance. Below we give extracts from the secret circular (also dated May 11)[48] directing that press articles dealing with the disorders in the factories and with the workers' attitude towards the employers be published *only by permission of the Department of Police*, which proves better than all arguments that the government itself is inclined to regard the labour unrest as a matter of state importance. The article in *Novoye Vremya* is of particular interest precisely for the reason that it outlines a complete state programme, which in effect amounts to allaying the discontent by a few petty and in part fictitious doles to which are attached pompous signboards about protective policy, cordiality, etc., and which provide pretexts for increasing surveillance by government officials. But this programme, which is not a new one, embodies, one may say, the "acme" of wisdom of modern statesmen, not only in Russia, but also in the West. In a

society based on private property and the enslavement of millions of propertyless toilers by a handful of rich people, the government cannot be anything but the loyal friend and ally of the exploiters and the most reliable guardian of their power. In our times, guns, bayonets, and whips are not a sufficiently reliable guardian; it is necessary to convince the exploited that the government stands above classes, that it does not serve the interests of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, but those of justice, that it is concerned with protecting the weak and the poor against the rich and the powerful, etc. Napoleon III in France and Bismarck and Wilhelm II in Germany exerted no little effort to play up to the workers in this way. But in Europe, where there is a more or less free press, a representative government, electoral campaigns, and well-established political parties, all these hypocritical tricks were quickly exposed. In Asia, however, which includes Russia, where the masses of the people are so wretched and ignorant, and where there are such strong prejudices fostering faith in Our Father the Tsar, tricks of this kind are quite successful. One of the very characteristic signs that the European spirit is beginning to penetrate into Russia is the *failure* with which this policy has met in the last ten or twenty years. Over and over again it was tried, but each time, within a few years after the enactment of some "protective" (allegedly protective) labour law, there was a reversion to the old state of affairs—the number of discontented workers increased, ferment grew, unrest gained in scope—again the "protective" policy was announced with a blare of trumpets, again pompous phrases could be heard about heartfelt solicitude for the workers; another law was passed providing a penny's worth of benefit and a pound's worth of empty and lying words for the workers, and in a few years' time the whole business was repeated. The government was as frantic as a squirrel in a cage, and went to any lengths, in one form or another, to stop up the gaps with sops and shreds; but the discontent broke out in ever newer places with increasing vigour.

Let us recall the outstanding points in the history of "labour legislation" in Russia. Towards the end of the seventies there were big strikes in St. Petersburg, and the socialists tried to take advantage of the situation to inten-

sify their agitation. Alexander III included factory legislation in his so-called "popular" (but in fact aristocratic-police) policy. In 1882 the Factory Inspectorate was introduced and at first its reports were even published. The government, of course, was not pleased with these reports and *ceased their publication*. The factory inspection laws proved to be merely a stopgap. Then came the years 1884-85; the industrial crisis gave rise to a powerful movement among the workers, and there were a number of turbulent strikes in the central district (the Morozov cotton-mill strike[49] being particularly noteworthy). Again the "protective" policy was brought to the fore, this time advocated with particular zeal by Katkov in *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*.[50] Katkov fumed and raged over the fact that the Morozov strikers were tried by a jury, and he described the hundred and one questions submitted by the court for the jury's decision as "a hundred-and-one gun salute in honour of the appearance of the labour question in Russia"; but, at the same time, he demanded that the "state" come to the defence of the workers and prohibit the monstrous system of fines that had ultimately aroused the Morozov cotton weavers to revolt. The law of 1886 was passed; it greatly widened the powers of the Factory Inspectorate and prohibited the imposition of arbitrary fines to benefit the employers. Ten years passed, and again there was an outbreak of labour unrest. The strikes of 1895, particularly the great strike of 1896,[51] caused the government to tremble with fear (especially on account of the fact that the Social-Democrats were by then regularly marching shoulder to shoulder with the workers); with unprecedented celerity, it passed the "protective" law (June 2, 1897) for a shorter working day. During the discussion of the projected law in committee the officials of the Ministry of the Interior, including the director of the Department of Police, declared loudly that the factory workers must come to regard the government as their constant protector and their just and merciful patron (see the pamphlet *The Secret Documents on the Law of June 2, 1897*[52]). Although passed, the protective law is being curtailed and rendered ineffective on the sly through circulars issued by the selfsame government. Another industrial crisis sets in. The workers for the hundredth time are

convinced that the "protection" of the police government cannot substantially alleviate their conditions, or give them liberty to look after themselves; again unrest and street fighting, again the government is anxious, again we hear police speeches about "state protection", this time proclaimed in *Novoye Vremya*. Gentlemen! Will you never tire of scooping up water with a sieve?

No, the government, of course, will never tire of repeating its attempts to intimidate the irreconcilable workers and decoy the weaker, the more foolish, and more cowardly, by means of a dole. Nor will we ever tire of exposing the real meaning of these attempts and of exposing "statesmen" who but yesterday ordered soldiers to shoot down the workers and today are shouting about protection; who but yesterday talked about their justice and their patronage of the workers and today are seizing the best of the workers and intellectuals, one after another, and leaving them to the mercy of the police without trial. Therefore we consider it necessary to dwell on the "state programme" of *Novoye Vremya* in good time before some new "protective" law is promulgated. Moreover, the admissions made in this connection by a publication so "authoritative" in the sphere of home politics as *Novoye Vremya* are worthy of attention.

Novoye Vremya is compelled to admit that the "regrettable manifestations in the sphere of the labour question" are not accidental. Of course, the socialists, too, are responsible (the newspaper avoids mentioning the awful word "socialist", preferring such vague terms as "pernicious pseudo-doctrines" and the "propaganda of anti-state and anti-social ideas"); but ... but why are the socialists so successful among the workers? *Novoye Vremya*, of course, does not miss an opportunity to hurl abuse at the workers: they are so "undeveloped and ignorant" that they willingly listen to the pernicious propaganda of the socialists, so harmful to the welfare of the police. Consequently, the socialists and the workers are to blame, and the gendarmes have long been waging a desperate war against the guilty, filling the prisons and places of exile. But to no avail. Apparently, there is *something in the conditions of the factory workers* which "engenders and fosters discontent with their present conditions" and thus "favours the success" of socialism.

"The severe toil of the factory workers in extremely unfavourable conditions of life provides them with a bare subsistence for as long as they are able to work, and in every emergency when they are without work for any length of time, they find themselves in desperate straits, as, for example, the workers in the Baku oilfields described recently in the newspapers." Government supporters, thus, are compelled to admit that the success of socialism is due to the really bad conditions of the workers. But the admission is made in such a vague and evasive form, and with such reservations, that it is clear that people of this sort cannot possibly have the slightest intention of touching the "sacred property" of the capitalists which oppresses the workers. "Unfortunately," writes *Novoye Vremya*, "we know too little about the actual state of affairs in regard to the labour question in Russia." Yes, unfortunately indeed! And "we" know little, precisely because we permit the police government to keep the whole press in slavery, to gag every one who honestly attempts to expose the scandalous state of affairs in our country. But "we" do try to turn the working man's hatred not against the Asiatic government but against the non-Russians. *Novoye Vremya* broadly hints at the "non-Russian factory managers", and calls them "coarse and greedy". Such a bait is likely to trap only the most ignorant and undeveloped workers, those who believe that all their misfortunes come from the "Germans" or the "Jews" and who do not know that the German and the Jewish workers unite to fight their German and Jewish exploiters. But even the workers who do not know this have learned from thousands of examples that the Russian capitalists are the "greediest" and most unceremonious of all capitalists, and that the Russian police and the Russian Government are the "coarsest" of all.

Of interest, too, are *Novoye Vremya*'s regrets that the workers are no longer so ignorant and submissive as is the peasantry. The paper bewails the fact that the workers "are abandoning their rural nests", that the "factory districts become the gathering centres of mixed masses", that the "villagers are abandoning their villages with their modest [that is the heart of the matter], but independent, social and economic interests and relationships". Indeed, they

have something to bewail. "The villagers" are tied to their nests, and out of fear of losing them, dare not submit demands to their landlord, to threaten him with strikes, etc. The villagers do not know conditions in other places and are interested only in the affairs of their own hamlet (the supporters of the government call this the "independent interests" of the villager; knowing his place, not poking his nose into politics—what can please the authorities more?); but in this hamlet, the local leech, the landlord or the kulak, knows every single individual; the peasants have all inherited from their fathers and grandfathers the servile lesson of submission, and there is no one there to awaken consciousness in them. In the factory, however, the people are "mixed", are not tied to their nests (it is all the same to them where they work), they have seen and learned things, and are bold and full of interest in everything that is going on in the world.

Notwithstanding this deplorable transformation of the humble muzhik into a class-conscious worker, our police wiseacres still hope to delude the working masses with phrases about "the state's protection of the workers' welfare". *Novoye Vremya* fortifies this hope with the following outworn argument: "Capitalism, proud and all-powerful in the West, is still an infant in our country, it can walk only in leading strings, and these are provided by the government."... Now, only a humble peasant will believe this old song about the omnipotence of the authorities! The worker, however, sees all too often that the capitalists keep the police, the church, and the military and civil officials in "leading strings". And so, continues *Novoye Vremya*, the government "*must insist*" upon an improvement in the workers' conditions, i.e., it must demand this improvement of the employers. Simple, is it not? Issue an order, and, presto, the thing is done. But it is easy to talk; in point of fact, the orders of the authorities, even the most "modest", such as the establishment of hospitals at the factories, have been ignored by the capitalists for whole decades. Moreover, the government would not dare to order the capitalists to do anything that would seriously affect the "sacred" right of private property. Furthermore, the government wants no serious improvement in the conditions of the workers, because in

thousands of instances it is an employer itself and underpays and oppresses the workers in the Obukhov Works and in hundreds of other places, as well as tens of thousands of postal and railway employees, etc., etc. *Novoye Vremya*, realising that no one would take the orders of our government seriously, tries to bolster up its position with lofty historical examples. This should be done, it says in regard to the improvement in the conditions of the workers, "in the same way as half a century ago, when the government took the peasant question in hand, when it was guided by the wise conviction that it would be better, through reforms from above, to avert the presentation of demands for such reforms from below and not to wait for such an eventuation".

Now, this is really a valuable admission. Before the emancipation of the peasants, the tsar indicated to the nobility the possibility of a popular rebellion, saying that it would be better to emancipate from above than to wait until they began to emancipate themselves from below. And now this cringing newspaper admits that the mood of the workers fills it with a fear no less than did the mood of the peasants "on the eve of freedom". "Better from above than from below"! The autocracy's newspaper lackeys are profoundly mistaken if they think there is a "similarity" between the demands for reforms today and those of that time. The peasants demanded the abolition of serfdom, having nothing against the tsar's rule and believing in the tsar. The workers today are revolting first and foremost against the government; they realise that their lack of rights under the police autocracy binds them hand and foot in their struggle against the capitalists and for that reason they demand liberation from governmental tyranny and governmental outrage. The workers are also in a state of unrest "on the eve of freedom", but this will be the liberation of the whole people, which is wresting political freedom from the despots.

* * *

Do you know what great reform is proposed in order to hush the discontent of the workers and to demonstrate to them the "state's protection"? If persistent rumour is to be believed, a struggle is going on between the Ministry of

Finance and the Ministry of the Interior. The latter demands that the Factory Inspectorate be placed under its control; for then, it argues, the factory inspectors will be less likely to indulge the capitalists and will show more regard for the interests of the workers and in this way avert unrest. Let the workers prepare for this new act of the tsar's grace; the factory inspectors will don different uniforms and they will be placed on the staff of another ministry (in all probability with a rise in salary), the very ministry, indeed (especially the Department of Police), which for such a long time past has been demonstrating its love and solicitude for the workers.

Iskra, No. 6, July 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

THE LESSONS OF THE CRISIS

The commercial and industrial crisis has already dragged on for almost two years. Apparently it is still growing, spreading to new branches of industry and to new districts, and is becoming more acute as a result of the failure of more banks. Every issue of our newspaper since last December has in one form or another shown the development of the crisis and its disastrous effects. The time has come to raise the general question of the causes and the significance of this phenomenon. For Russia, it is a comparatively new phenomenon, as new as Russian capitalism. In the old capitalist countries—i.e., in the countries where the greatest part of the goods is produced for sale, and where the majority of the workers own neither land nor tools, but sell their labour-power to employers, to the owners of property, to those to whom the land, the factories, the machinery, etc., belong—in the capitalist countries, crises are an old phenomenon, recurring from time to time, like attacks of a chronic disease. Hence, crises may be predicted, and when capitalism began to develop with particular rapidity in Russia, the present crisis was predicted in Social-Democratic literature. The pamphlet *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*, written at the end of 1897, stated: "We are apparently now passing through the period in the capitalist cycle [a rotation, in which the same events repeat themselves like summer and winter] when industry is 'prospering', when business is brisk, when the factories are working at full capacity, and when countless new factories, new enterprises, joint-stock companies, railway enterprises, etc., etc., are springing up like mushrooms. One need not be a prophet to foretell the inevitable and fairly sharp crash

that is bound to succeed this period of industrial 'prosperity'. This crash will ruin masses of small owners, will throw masses of workers into the ranks of the unemployed...."* And the crash came with a severity unparalleled in Russia. What is the cause of this horrible, chronic disease of capitalist society, which recurs so regularly that its coming can be forecast?

Capitalist production cannot develop otherwise than by leaps and bounds—two steps forward and one step (and sometimes two) back. As we have said, capitalist production is production for sale, the production of commodities for the market. Production is conducted by individual capitalists, each producing on his own and none of them able to say exactly what kind and what amount of commodities will be required on the market. Production is carried on haphazardly; each producer is concerned only in excelling the others. Quite naturally, therefore, the quantity of commodities produced may not correspond to the market demand. This probability becomes particularly great when the enormous market is suddenly extended to new huge, unexplored territories. This was precisely the situation at the beginning of the industrial "boom" we experienced not so long ago. The capitalists of all Europe stretched out their paws towards that part of the globe inhabited by hundreds of millions of people, towards Asia, of which until recently only India and a small section of the coastal regions had been closely connected with the world market. The Transcaspian Railway began to "open up" Central Asia for the capitalists; the "Great Siberian Railway" (great, not only because of its length, but because of the unrestricted plunder of the Treasury by the contractors and the unrestricted exploitation of the workers who built it) opened up Siberia. Japan began to develop into an industrial nation and strove to make a breach in the Chinese Wall, opening the way to a choice morsel into which the capitalists of England, Germany, France, Russia, and even Italy immediately plunged their teeth. The construction of gigantic railways, the expansion of the world market, and the growth of commerce, all stimulated an unexpected revival of industry, an increase of new

* See present edition, Vol. 2, p. 346.—*Ed.*

enterprises, a wild hunt for commodity markets, a hunt for profits, the floating of new companies, and the attraction to industry of masses of fresh capital, which consisted partly of the small savings of small capitalists. It is not surprising that this wild world-hunt for new and unknown markets led to a terrific crash.

To obtain a clear idea of the nature of this hunt for markets and profits, we must remember what giants took part in it. When we speak of "separate enterprises" and "individual capitalists", we sometimes forget that, strictly speaking, these terms are inexact. In reality, only the appropriation of profit has remained individual but production itself has become social. Gigantic crashes have become possible and inevitable, only because powerful *social* productive forces have become subordinated to a gang of rich men, whose only concern is to make profits. We shall illustrate this by an example from Russian industry. Recently the crisis has spread to the oil industry, in which such enterprises as the Nobel Brothers Oil Company are engaged. In 1899 the company sold 163,000,000 poods of oil products to the value of 53,500,000 rubles, while in 1900 it sold 192,000,000 poods to the value of 72,000,000 rubles. In one year, a single enterprise increased the value of its output by 18,500,000 rubles! This "single enterprise" is maintained by the combined labour of tens and hundreds of thousands of workers engaged in extracting oil and refining it; in delivering it by pipeline, railways, seas, and rivers; and in making the necessary machinery, warehouses, materials, lighters, steamers, etc. These tens of thousands of workers work for the whole of society, but their labour is controlled by a handful of millionaires, who appropriate the entire profit earned by the organised labour of this mass of workers. (In 1899 the Nobel Company made a net profit of 4,000,000 rubles, and in 1900 the figure was 6,000,000 rubles, of which the shareholders received 1,300 rubles per 5,000-ruble-share, with five members of the board of directors receiving *bonuses* to the amount of 528,000 rubles!) When several such enterprises fling themselves into the wild chase for a place in an unknown market, is it surprising that a crisis sets in?

Furthermore, for an enterprise to make profit, its goods must be sold, purchasers must be found. The purchasers

of these goods must comprise the entire population, because these colossal enterprises produce whole mountains of goods. But nine-tenths of the population of all capitalist countries are poor; they are workers who receive extremely miserable wages and peasants who, in the main, live even worse than the workers. Now, when, in the period of a boom, the large industrial enterprises set out to produce as vast a quantity of goods as possible, they flood the market with such a huge quantity of goods that the majority of the population, being poor, cannot pay for them. The number of machines, tools, warehouses, railroads, etc., continues to grow. From time to time, however, this process of growth is interrupted because the masses of the people for whom, in the last analysis, these improved instruments of production are intended, remain in a state of poverty that verges on beggary. The crisis shows that modern society could produce immeasurably more goods for the improvement of the living conditions of the entire working people, if the land, factories, machines, etc., had not been seized by a handful of private owners, who extract millions of profits out of the poverty of the people. The crisis shows that the workers should not confine themselves to the struggle for individual concessions from the capitalists. While industry is in upswing, such concessions may be won (the Russian workers on more than one occasion between 1894 and 1898 won concessions by energetic struggle); but when the crash comes, the capitalists not only withdraw the concessions they made, but take advantage of the helpless position of the workers to force wages down still lower. And so things will inevitably continue until the army of the socialist proletariat overthrows the domination of capital and private property. The crisis shows how near-sighted were those socialists (who call themselves "Critics", probably because they borrow uncritically the doctrines of the bourgeois economists) who two years ago loudly proclaimed that crashes were becoming less and less probable.

The lessons of the crisis, which has exposed the absurdity of subordinating social production to private property, are so instructive that even the bourgeois press is now demanding stricter supervision—e.g., over the banks. But no supervision will prevent the capitalists from setting up

enterprises in times of boom which must inevitably become bankrupt later on. Alchevsky, the founder of a land and a commercial bank in Kharkov, both now bankrupt, acquired millions of rubles by fair means or foul for the purpose of establishing and maintaining mining and metallurgical enterprises that promised wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. A hitch in industry wrecked these banks and mining and metallurgical enterprises (the Donets-Yuryev Company). But what does the "crash" of enterprises mean in capitalist society? It means that the smaller capitalists, capitalists of the "second magnitude", are eliminated by the big millionaires. The place of Alchevsky, the Kharkov millionaire, is taken by the Moscow millionaire, Ryabushinsky, who, being a richer capitalist, will bring greater pressure to bear on the workers. The supplanting of smaller capitalists by big capitalists, the increased power of capital, ruination of masses of small property-owners (e.g., small investors, who lose all their property in a bank crash), the frightful impoverishment of the workers—all this is brought about by the crisis. We recall also cases described in *Iskra* of capitalists lengthening the working day and discharging class-conscious workers in an effort to replace them by more submissive people from the villages.

The effect of the crisis in Russia is, in general, ever so much greater than in any other country. Stagnation in industry is accompanied by famine among the peasantry. Unemployed workers are being sent out of the towns to the villages, but where can the unemployed peasants be sent? By sending the workers to the villages, the authorities desire to clear the cities of the discontented people; but perhaps those sent out will be able to rouse at least part of the peasantry from its age-long submission and induce it, not only to request, but *to demand*. The workers and peasants are being drawn closer to each other, not only by unemployment and hunger, but also by police tyranny, which deprives the workers of the possibility of uniting to defend their own interests and prevents even the aid of well-disposed people from reaching the peasantry. The heavy paw of the police is becoming a hundred times heavier for the millions of people who have lost all means of livelihood. The gendarmes and the police in the towns, the rural superin-

tendents and the village policemen in the rural districts, see clearly that hatred against them is growing, and they are beginning to fear, not only the food-kitchens, set up in the villages, but even advertisements in the newspapers appealing for funds. Afraid of voluntary contributions! In truth, the thief fears his own shadow. When the thief sees a passer-by offering alms to the man he has robbed, he begins to think that the two are shaking hands in a pledge to settle accounts with him.

Iskra, No. 7, August 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

THE SERF-OWNERS AT WORK

On June 8, 1901, a law was adopted governing the grants of state lands in Siberia to private persons. How this new law will be applied, the future will show; but its character is so instructive, it so strikingly demonstrates the undisguised nature and the real strivings of the tsarist government, that it should be analysed thoroughly and made known as widely as possible among the working class and the peasantry.

Our government has long been granting doles to the noble, aristocratic landlords. It established for them the Nobles' Bank, it granted them all sorts of privileges in obtaining loans and relief in the payment of arrears, it helped them to arrange a strike of the millionaire sugar-refiners in order to raise prices and increase their profits; it took care to provide the ruined sons of the aristocracy with soft jobs as rural superintendents, and it is now arranging for the government purchase of vodka on very favourable terms for the noble distillers. However, in making grants of state lands, it not only makes gifts to the richest and most aristocratic exploiters, but creates a *new* class of exploiters and dooms millions of peasants and workers to permanent bondage to new landlords.

Let us examine the principal features of the new law. It must be observed, first of all, that before its introduction in the Council of State by the Minister of Agriculture and State Property, the law was discussed *at a special conference on the affairs of the nobility*. It is generally known that in Russia today it is not the workers and peasants, but the noble landlords who suffer most from poverty, and so this "special conference" hastened to devise measures by which

their poverty might be relieved. State lands in Siberia will be sold and leased to "private persons" for the purpose of "private enterprise"; but foreigners and non-Russian subjects of the tsar (the Jews included among the latter) are prohibited *for ever* from acquiring these lands in any way. The lands may be leased (and we shall see that this is the most advantageous transaction for the future landlords) only to nobles, "who", as the law states, "owing to their economic reliability, are the most desirable landowners to have in Siberia from the standpoint of the government". Thus, the standpoint of the government is that the labouring population must be enslaved to the big landed aristocracy. How big can be seen from the fact that salable allotments may not exceed *three thousand dessiatines*, while no limit at all is placed on the amount of land leased, and the term of the leases may be for a period *up to ninety-nine years*! According to the government's calculations, a poor landlord needs *two hundred times* as much land as a peasant, who is given fifteen dessiatines of land in Siberia for himself and his family.

The easy terms and the exceptions to the rule which the law provides for the landlords are truly astounding. The lessee pays nothing for the first five years. If he purchases the land he has leased (which *right* the new law gives him), payment is spread over a period of thirty-seven years. With special permission, an area of land exceeding 3,000 dessiatines may be set aside for sale, land may be sold at agreed prices and not by auction, while arrears may be postponed for one or even three years. It must not be forgotten that generally only the higher dignitaries and persons with court connections, etc., will take advantage of the new law—and such people will obtain these easy terms and the exemptions quite casually, in the course of a drawing-room conversation with a governor or a minister.

But there's the rub! Of what use are these bits of land, three thousand dessiatines in area, to the landowning generals if there is no "muzhik" forced to work for these generals? However rapidly poverty is increasing among the people in Siberia, the local peasant is nevertheless much more independent than the "Russian" peasant and he has not been trained to work under the bludgeon. The new law is intended

to train him. "The lands appointed for private enterprises *shall*, *as far as possible*, *be divided into lots alternating with areas* held by the peasant allotment holders", says Article 4 of the new law. The tsarist government displays its solicitude for the poor peasants and tries to provide "means of livelihood" for them. Ten years ago, the same Mr. Yermolov who now, as Minister of Agriculture and State Property, has introduced into the Council of State the new Siberian land law providing for the disposal of state lands to private persons, wrote a book (anonymously) entitled *The Crop Failure and the Distress of the People*. In that work he openly declared that there was no reason for permitting peasants who could obtain "a livelihood" from their local landlords to migrate to Siberia. Russian statesmen do not hesitate to express purely feudal views; peasants were created to work for the landlords, and peasants, therefore, must not be "permitted" to migrate to a place of their choice, if thereby the landlords will be deprived of cheap labour. And when, despite all the difficulties, the red tape, and even the downright prohibition, the peasants still continued to migrate to Siberia in hundreds of thousands, the tsarist government, acting like the steward of an old-time manorial lord, hastened after them to work them to exhaustion in their new habitations. If, however, "alternating" with the puny peasant allotments* and peasant lands (the best of which are already occupied), there will be lots of three thousand dessiatines belonging to the noble landlords, then all temptation to migrate to Siberia will disappear very soon. The more cramped the conditions of the surrounding peasants become, the more the new landlords' land will increase in value; the peasants will be obliged to hire themselves out cheaply, or lease land from the landlords at exorbitant rates—just as in "Russia". The new law sets out precisely to create as quickly as possible a new paradise for the landlords and a new hell for the peasants; there is a special clause on the leasing of land for a *single* season. While special permission is required to sublease state lands, it is permitted quite

* By the terms of the 1861 reform, peasant allotments, unlike peasant lands, could not be sold.—*Tr.*

freely for one season. All that the landlord need trouble about is to engage a steward, who will sublease land by the dessiatine to the peasants living on the allotments "alternating" with the landlord's land, and send his master the net profit.

Probably many nobles will not care to carry on even such an "enterprise". In that case, they can make a nice little pile at one stroke by reselling the state land to real farmers. It is no accident that the new law has been timed with the construction of a railroad in Siberia, when banishment to Siberia has been abolished, and when migration to Siberia has increased to an enormous extent; all this will inevitably lead (and is already leading) to a rise in land values. Hence, the granting of state lands to private persons at the present time is nothing more nor less than plunder of the Treasury by the nobles. The state lands are rising in value, but they are being leased or sold on highly advantageous terms to generals and people of that stripe, who will benefit by the rising prices. In Ufa Gubernia, for instance, in one uyezd alone, the nobles and officials made the following transaction in land sold to them (on the basis of a similar law): they paid the government 60,000 rubles for the land and within two years sold it for 580,000 rubles, obtaining for the mere resale *more than hall a million rubles*! From this instance we can imagine the millions of rubles that will pass into the pockets of the poverty-stricken landlords thanks to the land grants throughout Siberia.

With all sorts of lofty arguments the government and its adherents seek to cover up this naked robbery. They talk about the development of culture in Siberia, and of the enormous importance of model farms. As a matter of fact, the large estates, which place the neighbouring peasants in a hopeless position, can at the present time serve only to develop the most uncultured methods of exploitation. Model farms are not established by robbing the Treasury, and the grant of lands will lead simply to land speculation among the nobles and officials, or to farming methods in which bondage and usury will flourish. The noble aristocrats, in alliance with the government, have prohibited Jews and other non-Russians (whom they try to present to the ignorant people as particularly outrageous exploiters) from acquiring state lands in Siberia, in order

that they may *themselves* engage in the worst type of exploitation without hindrance.

There is talk also of the political significance of having the social-estate of landed nobility in Siberia; among the intelligentsia, it is said, there is a very large number of former exiles, of unreliable people there, who need to be counterbalanced by the establishment of a reliable support of the state, a reliable "local" element. This talk contains a greater and profounder truth than *Grazhdanin*[53] and *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* imagine. The police state is arousing so much hostility against itself among the masses that it finds it necessary artificially to create groups that can serve as pillars of the fatherland. It is essential for the government to create a class of big exploiters, who would be under obligation to it for everything and dependent upon its grace, who would make enormous profits by the most despicable methods (speculation and kulak exploitation), and, consequently, could always be relied upon to support every tyranny and oppression. The Asiatic government must find support in Asiatic large landownership, in a feudal system of "granting lands". And if it is not possible at present to grant "populated estates", it is possible at all events to grant estates *alternating* with the lands of peasants who are becoming more and more destitute. If it is not convenient simply to grant thousands of dessiatines of land gratis to the Court lickspittles, it is possible to cover up this wholesale bestowal of lands by their sale or "leasing" (for 99 years) that is attended by thousands of privileges. When we compare this land policy with that of modern progressive countries like America, for example, can we call it anything else but feudal? In America, no one would *dare* talk about permitting or not permitting migration; for in that country, every citizen has the right to go where he pleases. In that country every one who desires to engage in farming has the right *by law* to occupy vacant land in the outlying parts of the country. In America, they are not creating a class of Asiatic satraps, but a class of energetic farmers who have developed the productive forces of the country. Thanks to the abundant free land there, the working class in America enjoys the highest standard of living in the world.

And what a period our government has chosen for passing this serf-owners' law! It is a period of the most acute industrial crisis, when tens and hundreds of thousands are unemployed, when millions of peasants are again suffering from famine. The government has exerted all its efforts to prevent the disaster from being given "publicity". That is why it has sent the unemployed workers back to their village homes; that is why it has transferred food distribution from the Zemstvos to the police officials; that is why it has prohibited private persons from organising food-kitchens for the famine-stricken; and that is why it has gagged the press. But when the famine "publicity", so unpleasant to the ears of the well-fed, died down, Our Father the Tsar set to work to assist the poverty-stricken landlords and poor unfortunate courtier generals. We repeat, our task at the present time is simply to bring the contents of this new law to the knowledge of all. As they become acquainted with it, the most undeveloped sections of the workers, and the most backward and downtrodden peasants, will understand whom the present government serves and what kind of government the people must have.

Iskra, No. 8, September 10, 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

ROMANIA TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

A ZEMSTVO CONGRESS

The wave of excitement among the general public that spread over the country after the events of this spring is not receding. It makes itself felt in one form or another among all sections of Russian society, a society that as recently as January of this year seemed to be deaf and alien to the purposive work of Russian Social-Democracy. The government is bending its every effort to calm the troubled public conscience as quickly as possible with the usual soap bubbles such as the Manifesto of March 25 on "heartfelt protection", such as the so-called Vannovsky Reforms or the Sipyagin and Shakhovskoi[54] solemn buffoon tours of Russia.... Some of the more naïve among the general public will actually be calmed by such measures, but by far not all. Even the present-day Zemstvo people, about fifty per cent of whom are scared civil servants, seem to be coming out of the state of chronic trepidation to which they were reduced in the now historical stagnant epoch of the "Peacemaker-Tsar".

His Majesty the Bureaucracy, having now shed its crude covering of modesty, is arousing feelings of discontent and disgust even among the Zemstvos, among those timid people in whom civic courage and civic morality are almost completely atrophied.

We have been informed that in the city of X (for precaution, to remain unnamed) a congress of Zemstvo members was called at the end of June. It is said to have been attended by 40 or 50 Zemstvo people from several gubernias.

These people did not, of course, assemble to discuss political questions, but to solve peaceable, purely Zemstvo problems; they gathered "without infringing the bounds of

the department and the extent of their authority", as it is picturesquely expressed in the Zemstvo Instructions (Article 87). The meeting, however, was called without the permission and knowledge of the administration and, consequently, was held "in contravention of the Instructions for the activities of Zemstvo institutions", to quote the Instructions, and the assembled Zemstvo men gradually went over from the discussion of peaceable, innocent questions to a discussion of the general state of affairs. Such is the logic of life: conscientious Zemstvo men, howsoever they at times denounce radicalism and illegal work, are, by the force of events, faced with the necessity of illegal organisation and a more determined form of activity. Far be it from us to condemn this natural and perfectly correct path. It is time, at long last, for Zemstvo members to give an energetic and organised rebuff to a government that has taken the bit between its teeth, has killed rural self-government, has mutilated both urban and Zemstvo self-government, and with asinine obstinacy lays the axe to the last remnants of the Zemstvo institutions. It is said that one of the elderly and respected men of the Zemstvo, during the discussion at the congress on the question of how to combat the law setting limits to taxation by the Zemstvos, exclaimed: "Zemstvo members must, at last, say their word; for if they don't, they'll never be able to!" We are in complete agreement with the outcry of this liberal who is prepared to challenge the bureaucratic autocracy to open struggle. The Zemstvos are on the eve of internal bankruptcy. If the best Zemstvo men do not today take energetic measures, if they do not get rid of their usual Manilov[55] attitude, their trivial questions of secondary importance—"tinkering", as one venerable Zemstvo man put it—the Zemstvos will lose their adherents and turn into the usual "government offices". Such an inglorious death is inevitable; for one cannot with impunity for whole decades do nothing but show cowardice, offer thanks, and humbly petition; one must threaten, demand, stop wasting time on trifles, and settle down to the real work.

Iskra, No. 8, September 10, 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

THE AGRARIAN QUESTION AND THE "CRITICS OF MARX"[56]

Written in June-September 1901
Chapters I to IV were first published in *Zarya,* No. 2-3, December 1901, signed *N. Lenin*; Chapters V to IX were published in *Obrazovanije*,[57] No. 2, February 1906, signed *N. Lenin*

Published according to the *Zarya* and *Obrazovaniye* texts, checked with the text of the collection *The Agrarian Question*, by Vl. Ilyin, 1908

XV. 1906.

Образованіе.

ЖУРНАЛЪ

Литературный

и

общественно-политическій.

№ 2.

С.-ПЕТЕРБУРГЪ
Типо-литографія Б. М. Вольфа. Разъѣзжая, 15.
1906.

Facsimile of the title-page of the magazine *Obrazovaniye*, No. 2, for 1906 which carried chapters V-IX of Lenin's "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'".

Facsimile of the title-page of the magazine Образование, No. 2,
for 1906 which carried chapters V-IX of Lenin's
"The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'"

"... To argue ... that dogmatic Marxism has been jolted from its positions in the sphere of agrarian questions would be like forcing an open door...." So spoke *Russkoye Bogatstvo*[58] last year through the mouth of Victor Chernov (1900, No. 8, p. 204). What a peculiar quality this "dogmatic Marxism" possesses! For many years now scientists and very learned people in Europe have been gravely declaring (and newspaper scribes and journalists have been repeating it over and over again) that Marxism has been jolted from its positions by "criticism", and yet every new critic starts from the beginning, all over again, to bombard these allegedly destroyed positions. Mr. Chernov, for example, in the periodical *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, as well as in the collection, *At the Glorious Post*, in a *two-hundred-and-forty-page-long* "discussion" of Hertz' work* with his reader, "forces an open door". Hertz' work, which has been given such a lengthy exposition, is itself a review of Kautsky's book, and has been translated into Russian. Mr. Bulgakov, in keeping with his promise to refute this very same Kautsky, has published a whole two-volume study. Now, surely, no one will ever be able to find the remnants of "dogmatic Marxism", which lies crushed to death beneath this mountain of critical printed matter.

I

THE "LAW" OF DIMINISHING RETURNS

Let us first of all examine the general theoretical physiognomy of the Critics. Mr. Bulgakov published an article in the periodical *Nachalo*[59] criticising Kautsky's *Agrarian*

* See present volume, footnote to p. 130—*Tr.*

Question in which he at once exposed his stock of "critical" methods. He charged down on Kautsky with the dash and abandon of a veritable cavalier and "scattered" him to the winds. He put into Kautsky's mouth what he had not said, he accused him of ignoring the very circumstances and arguments which he, Kautsky, had expounded with precision, and he presented to the reader as *his own* the critical conclusions drawn by Kautsky. With the air of an expert, Mr. Bulgakov accused Kautsky of confounding technology with economics, and in doing so betrayed, not only incredible confusion, but also a disinclination to read to the end the page he quotes from his opponent's book. Needless to say, this article from the pen of the future professor is replete with outworn gibes against socialists, against the "theory of collapse", against utopianism, against belief in miracles, etc.* Now, in his doctoral thesis (*Capitalism and Agriculture*, St. Petersburg, 1900), Mr. Bulgakov settled all his accounts with Marxism and brought his "critical" evolution to its logical conclusion.

Mr. Bulgakov makes the "law of diminishing returns" the corner-stone of his "theory of agrarian development". We are treated to quotations from the works of the classics who established this "law" (according to which each additional investment of labour and capital in land produces, not a corresponding, but a diminishing quantity of products). We are given a list of the English economists who recognise this law. We are assured that it "has universal significance", that it is "an evident and absolutely undeniable truth", "which needs only to be stated clearly", etc., etc. The more emphatically Mr. Bulgakov expresses himself, the clearer it becomes that he is *retreating* to bourgeois political economy, which obscures social relationships by imaginary "eternal laws". Indeed, what does the "evidentness" of the notorious "law of diminishing returns" amount to? If each successive investment of labour and capital in land produced, not a diminishing, but an equal quantity of products,

* I replied immediately to Mr. Bulgakov's article in *Nachalo* by an article entitled "Capitalism in Agriculture". Following the suppression of *Nachalo*, my article was published in *Zhizn*,[60] 1900, Nos. 1 and 2. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*) (See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 105-59.—*Ed.*)

there would be no sense in extending the area of land under cultivation; additional quantities of grain would be produced on the same plot of land, however small, and "it would be possible to carry on the agriculture of the whole globe upon one dessiatine of land". This is the customary (*and the only*) argument advanced in favour of this "universal" law. A little thought, however, will prove to anyone that this argument is an empty abstraction, which ignores the most important thing—the level of technological development, the state of the productive forces. Indeed, the very term "additional (or successive) investments of labour and capital" *presupposes* changes in the methods of production, reforms in technique. In order to increase the quantity of capital invested in land to any considerable degree, new machinery must be *invented*, and there must be new methods of land cultivation, stock breeding, transport of products, and so on and so forth. Of course, "additional investments of labour and capital" may and do take place on a relatively small scale even when the technique of production has remained at the same level. In such cases, the "law of diminishing returns" is applicable *to a certain degree*, i.e., in the sense that the unchanged technique of production imposes relatively very narrow limits upon the investment of additional labour and capital. Consequently, instead of a universal law, we have an extremely relative "law"—so relative, indeed, that it cannot be called a "law", or even a cardinal specific feature of agriculture. Let us take for granted: the three-field system, cultivation of traditional grain crops, maintenance of cattle to obtain manure, lack of improved grassland and improved implements. Obviously, assuming that these conditions remain unchanged, the possibilities of investing additional labour and capital in the land are extremely limited. But even within the narrow limits in which some investment of additional labour and capital is still possible, a decrease in the productivity of each such additional investment will *not always and not necessarily* be observed. Let us take industry—flour-milling or ironworking, for example, in the period preceding world trade and the invention of the steam-engine. At that level of technical development, the limits to which additional labour and capital could be invested in a blacksmith's forge,

or in a wind- or water-mill, were very restricted; the inevitable thing that happened was that small smithies and flour-mills continued to multiply and increase in number until the radical changes in the methods of production created a basis for new forms of industry.

Thus, the "law of diminishing returns" does not at all apply to cases in which technology is progressing and methods of production are changing; it has only an extremely relative and restricted application to conditions in which technology remains unchanged. That is why neither Marx nor the Marxists speak of this "law", and only representatives of bourgeois science like Brentano make so much noise about it, since they are unable to abandon the prejudices of the old political economy, with its abstract, eternal, and natural laws.

Mr. Bulgakov defends the "universal law" by arguments deserving only of ridicule.

"What was formerly a free gift of Nature must now be produced by man: the wind and the rain broke up the soil, which was full of nutritive elements, and only a little effort on the part of man was required to produce what was needed. In the course of time, a larger and larger share of the productive work fell to man. As is the case everywhere, artificial processes more and more take the place of natural processes. But while in industry this expresses man's victory over Nature, in agriculture it indicates the increasing difficulties of an existence for which Nature is diminishing her gifts.

"In the present case it is immaterial whether the increasing difficulty of producing food is expressed in an increase in human labour or in an increase of its products, such as instruments of production, fertilisers [Mr. Bulgakov wishes to say that it is immaterial whether the increasing difficulty of producing food finds expression in an increased expenditure of human labour or in an increase in the products of human labour]; what is important is that food becomes more and more costly to man. This substitution of human labour for the forces of Nature and of artificial factors of production for natural factors is the law of diminishing returns" (16).

Evidently, Mr. Bulgakov is envious of the laurels of

Messrs. Struve and Tugan-Baranovsky, who arrived at the conclusion that it is not man who works with the help of machines, but machines that work with the help of man. And like those critics, he sinks to the level of vulgar political economy by talking about the forces of Nature being *superseded* by human labour, and so forth. Speaking generally, it is as impossible for human labour to supersede the forces of Nature as it is to substitute pounds for yards. Both in industry and in agriculture, man can only utilise the forces of Nature when he has learned how they operate, and he can *facilitate* this utilisation by means of machinery, tools, etc. That primitive man obtained all he required as a free gift of Nature is a silly fable for which Mr. Bulgakov would be howled down even by first-term students. Our age was not preceded by a Golden Age; and primitive man was absolutely crushed by the burden of existence, by the difficulties of the struggle against Nature. The introduction of machinery and of improved methods of production immeasurably eased man's struggle against Nature generally, and the production of food in particular. It has not become more difficult to produce food; it has become more difficult for the workers to obtain it because capitalist development has inflated ground-rent and the price of land, has concentrated agriculture in the hands of large and small capitalists, and, to a still larger extent, has concentrated machinery, implements, and money, without which successful production is impossible. To explain the aggravation of the workers' condition by the argument that Nature is reducing her gifts can mean only that one has become a bourgeois apologist.

"In accepting this law," continues Mr. Bulgakov, "we do not in the least assert that there is a continuously increasing difficulty in food production; nor do we deny progress in agriculture. To assert the first, and to deny the second, would be contrary to obvious facts. This difficulty does not grow uninterruptedly, of course; development proceeds in zigzag fashion. Discoveries in agronomics and technical improvements convert barren into fertile land and temporarily remove the tendency indicated by the law of diminishing returns" (ibid.).

Profound, is it not?

Technical progress is a "temporary" tendency, while the law of diminishing returns, i.e., diminishing productivity (and that not always) of additional investments of capital on the basis of an unchanging technique, "has universal significance"! This is equal to saying that the stopping of trains at stations represents the universal law of steam transport, while the motion of trains between stations is a temporary tendency paralysing the operation of the universal law of immobility.

Finally, extensive data clearly refute the universality of the law of diminishing returns—data on the agricultural as well as the non-agricultural population. Mr. Bulgakov himself admits that "if each country were restricted to its own natural resources, the procuring of food would call for an uninterrupted relative increase [note this!] in the quantity of labour and, consequently, in the agricultural population" (19). The diminution in the agricultural population of Western Europe, accordingly, is explained by the fact that the operation of the law of diminishing returns has been counteracted by the importation of grain.

An excellent explanation, indeed! Our pundit has forgotten a detail, namely, that a relative diminution in the agricultural population is common to all capitalist countries, both agricultural and grain-importing. The agricultural population is relatively diminishing in America and in Russia. It has been diminishing in France since the end of the eighteenth century (see figures in the same work of Mr. Bulgakov, II, p. 168). Moreover, the relative diminution of the agricultural population sometimes becomes an absolute diminution, whereas the excess of grain imports over exports was still quite insignificant in the thirties and forties, and *only after 1878* do we cease to find years in which grain exports exceed grain imports.* In Prussia there was a relative diminution in the agricultural population from 73.5 per cent in 1816 to 71.7 per cent in 1849, and to 67.5 per cent in 1871, whereas the importation of rye began only in the early sixties, and the importation of wheat in the early seventies (ibid., Part II, pp. 70 and 88). Finally, if

* *Statistique agricole de la France. Enquête de 1892*, Paris, 1897, p. 113. (*Agricultural Statistics of France. Survey of 1892.—Ed.*)

we take the European grain-importing countries, e.g., France and Germany during the last decade, we shall find that there has been *undoubted progress* in agriculture side by side with *an absolute diminution* in the number of workers engaged in farming. In France this number dropped from 6,913,504 in 1882 to 6,663,135 in 1892 (*Statistique agricole*, Part II, pp. 248-51), and in Germany from 8,064,000 in 1882 to 8,045,000 in 1895.* Thus, it may be said that the *entire* history of the nineteenth century, by a multitude of data on countries of the most varied character, proves irrefutably that the "universal" law of diminishing returns is *absolutely paralysed* by the "temporary" tendency of technological advance which enables a relatively (and sometimes absolutely) diminishing rural population to produce an increasing quantity of agricultural products for an increasing mass of population.

Incidentally, this mass of statistical data also refutes the two following main points of Mr. Bulgakov's "theory": first, his assertion that the theory that constant capital (implements and materials of production) grows more rapidly than variable capital (labour-power) "is absolutely inapplicable to agriculture". With an air of importance Mr. Bulgakov declares that this theory is wrong, and in proof of his opinion refers to: (a) "Professor A. Skvortsov" (celebrated mostly for having ascribed Marx's theory of the average

* *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, Neue Folge, Bd. 112: *Die Landwirtschaft im Deutschen Reich* (*Statistics of the German Empire*, New Series, Vol. 112: *Agriculture in the German Empire.—Ed.*), Berlin, 1898, *S.* 6 ★. This evidence of technological advance accompanied by a diminution in the agricultural population is of course not at all pleasing to Mr. Bulgakov, for it utterly destroys his Malthusianism. Our "strict scientist", therefore, resorts to the following trick: instead of taking agriculture in the strict sense of the term (land cultivation, livestock breeding, etc.), he (after adducing statistics on the increase in the quantity of *agricultural* produce obtained per hectare!) takes "agriculture in the broad sense", in which German statistics include hothouse cultivation, market gardening, *and forestry and fishing*! In this way, we get an increase in the sum-total of persons actually engaged in "agriculture"!! (Bulgakov, II, p. 133.) The figures quoted above apply to persons for whom agriculture is the *principal* occupation. The number of persons engaged in agriculture as a subsidiary occupation increased from 3,144,000 to 3,578,000. To add these to the previous figures is not entirely correct; but even if we do this, the increase is very small: from 11,208,000 to 11,623,000.

rate of profit to ill-intentioned propaganda); and (b) the fact that under intensive farming the number of workers employed per unit of land increases. This is an example of the deliberate refusal to understand Marx which fashionable Critics constantly display. Think of it: the theory of the more rapid growth of constant capital as compared with variable capital is refuted by the increase of *variable capital* per unit of land! And Mr. Bulgakov *fails to notice* that the very statistics he himself offers in such abundance confirm Marx's theory. In German agriculture as a whole the number of workers employed diminished from 8,064,000 in 1882 to 8,045,000 in 1895 (and if the number of persons engaged in agriculture as a subsidiary occupation is added, it increased from 11,208,000 to 11,623,000, i.e., only by 3.7 per cent). In the same period, livestock increased from 23,000,000 to 25,400,000 (all livestock expressed in terms of cattle), i.e., by more than 10 per cent; the number of cases in which the five most important agricultural machines were employed increased from 458,000 to 922,000, i.e., more than doubled; the quantity of fertilisers imported increased from 636,000 tons (1883) to 1,961,000 tons (1892), and the quantity of potassium salts from 304,000 double centners to 2,400,000.* Is it not clear from this that constant capital has increased in relation to variable capital? This, quite apart from the fact that these summary figures to a great extent conceal the progress of large-scale production. We shall deal with this point later.

Secondly, the progress of agriculture simultaneously with a diminution, or a negligible absolute increase, in the agricultural population completely refutes Mr. Bulgakov's absurd attempt to revive Malthusianism. The first of the Russian "ex-Marxists" to make this attempt was probably Mr. Struve, in his *Critical Remarks*; but he, as always, never went beyond hesitant, half-expressed, and ambiguous remarks, which he did not carry to their logical conclusion or round off into a complete system of views. Mr. Bulgakov, however, is bolder and more consistent; he unhesitatingly converts the "law of diminishing returns" into "one of the

---

* *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, Bd. 112, *S.* 36★; Bulgakov, II, 135.

most important laws of the history of civilisation" (*sic*! p. 18). "The entire history of the nineteenth century ... with its problems of riches and poverty would be unintelligible without this law." "I have not the least doubt that the social question as it is posed today is materially linked with this law." (Our strict scientist hastens to make this declaration on page 18 of his "Inquiry"!)... "There is no doubt," he declares at the end of his work, "that where over-population exists, a certain part of the poverty that prevails must be put under the heading of *absolute poverty*, the poverty of production and not of distribution" (II, 221). "The population problem, in the special form in which it presents itself to us as a result of the conditions of agricultural production, is, in my opinion, the principal obstacle—at the present time at any rate—in the way of any extensive application of the principles of collectivism or co-operation in agricultural enterprise" (II, 265). "The past leaves to the future a heritage in the shape of a grain problem more terrible and more difficult than the social problem—the problem of production and not of distribution" (II, 455), and so on and so forth. There is no need for us to discuss the scientific significance of this "theory", which is inseparably connected with the universal law of diminishing returns, since we have already examined this law. The fact that critical flirtation with Malthusianism in its logical development has inevitably resulted in a descent to the most vulgar bourgeois apologetics is proved by the above-quoted arguments, which Mr. Bulgakov has presented with a frankness that leaves nothing to be desired.

In a further essay we shall examine data from several new sources cited by our Critics (who constantly din into our ears that orthodox Marxists fear specification) and show that Mr. Bulgakov generally stereotypes the word "overpopulation", the use of which relieves him of the necessity of making any kind of analysis, particularly of analysing the class antagonisms among the "peasantry". Here we shall confine ourselves to the general theoretical aspect of the agrarian question and touch on the theory of rent. "As for Marx," writes Mr. Bulgakov, "we must say that in Volume III of *Capital*, in the form in which we have it now, he adds nothing worthy of attention to Ricardo's theory of differ-

ential rent" (87). Let us bear this "nothing worthy of attention" in mind and compare the Critic's verdict with the following statement made by him previously: "Notwithstanding his obvious opposition to this law [the law of diminishing returns], Marx appropriates, in its fundamental principles, Ricardo's theory of rent, which is based on this law" (13). Thus, according to Mr. Bulgakov, Marx failed to see the connection between Ricardo's theory of rent and the law of diminishing returns, and therefore he never carried his argument to its logical conclusion! In regard to such a statement we can say but one thing—that no one distorts Marx to the degree that the ex-Marxists do and no one is so incredibly un... un... unabashed in ascribing to the writer he is criticising a thousand and one mortal sins.

Mr. Bulgakov's assertion is a glaring distortion of the truth. Actually, Marx not only saw the connection between Ricardo's theory of rent and his erroneous doctrine of diminishing returns, but quite definitely exposed Ricardo's error. Anyone who has read Volume III of *Capital* with even a grain of "attention" could not but have observed the fact, very much "worthy of attention", that it was precisely Marx who *freed* the theory of differential rent from *all connection* with the notorious "law of diminishing returns". Marx demonstrated that the unequal productivity of different investments of capital in land was all that was necessary for the formation of differential rent. The question as to whether the transition is from better land to worse land or vice versa, as to whether the productivity of the additional investments of capital in land diminishes or increases, is absolutely immaterial. In actual practice, all sorts of combinations of these varying cases take place; and it is utterly impossible to subject these combinations to a single general rule. For example, Marx first of all describes the first form of differential rent, which arises from the unequal productivity of capital invested in unequal plots of land, and he explains his case by tables (concerning which Mr. Bulgakov severely rebukes Marx for his "excessive predilection for clothing what are often very simple thoughts in a complicated mathematical garb". This complicated mathematical garb is simply the four rules of arithmetic, and the very simple ideas, as we see, were completely mis-

understood by our learned professor). After analysing these tables, Marx draws the conclusion: "This takes care of the first false assumption regarding differential rent—still found among West, Malthus, and Ricardo—namely, that it necessarily presupposes a movement toward worse and worse soil, or an ever-decreasing fertility of the soil. It can be formed, as we have seen, with a movement toward better and better soil; it can be formed when a better soil takes the lowest position that was formerly occupied by the worst soil; it can be connected with a progressive improvement in agriculture. The precondition is merely the inequality of different kinds of soil." (Marx does not speak here of the unequal productivity of successive investments of capital in land, because this gives rise to the *second* form of differential rent; in this chapter he speaks only of the *first* form of differential rent.) "So far as the increase in productivity is concerned, it [differential rent—*Ed*.] assumes that the increase in absolute fertility of the total area does not eliminate this inequality, but either increases it, leaves it unchanged, or merely reduces it" (*Das Kapital*, III, 2, *S*. 199).[61] Mr. Bulgakov *failed to see* the radical difference between Marx's theory of differential rent and Ricardo's theory of rent. He preferred to rummage in Volume III of *Capital* for "a fragment which would rather suggest the idea that Marx was by no means opposed to the law of diminishing returns" (p. 13, footnote). We apologise to the reader for having to devote so much space to a passage that is quite immaterial to the question that concerns us and Mr. Bulgakov. But what can one do when the heroes of modern criticism (who have the insolence to charge orthodox Marxists with resorting to rabulous disputation) distort the absolutely clear meaning of a doctrine to which they are opposed by quoting passages out of context and in faulty translations? Mr. Bulgakov quotes the passage that he found as follows: "From the standpoint of the capitalist mode of production, a relative increase in the price of (*agricultural*) products always takes place, *since* [we ask the reader to pay particular attention to the words *we* have italicised] these products cannot be secured unless an expenditure is incurred, a payment made, which was not previously made." Marx goes on to say that elements of Nature entering as

agents into production, costing nothing, represent a free gift of Nature's productive power of labour; but if for the production of an additional product it is necessary to work without the help of this natural power, a new capital outlay is required, which leads to an increase in the cost of production.

Concerning this mode of "quoting" we have three remarks to make. First, *Mr. Bulgakov himself introduced* the word "since", which gives his tirade the definite sense of establishing some kind of "law". *In the original* (*Das Kapital*, III, 2, *S.* 277-78)[62] *Marx does not say "since" but "when"*. When something is paid for which formerly did not have to be paid for, there is a relative increase in the price of the product. Is *that* proposition anything like a recognition of the "law" of diminishing returns? Secondly, Mr. Bulgakov inserts in parentheses the word "agricultural". *In the original text the word does not appear at all*. In all probability, with the frivolousness characteristic of the Critics, Mr. Bulgakov decided that in this passage Marx could be speaking only of agricultural products, and therefore hastened to give his readers an "explanation" that is a complete misrepresentation. In point of fact, Marx in this passage speaks of products generally; in the original, the passage quoted by Mr. Bulgakov is preceded by the words: "But, in general, the following is to be noted." Freely bestowed natural forces may also enter into industrial production—in the same section on rent Marx gives the example of a waterfall which for a certain factory takes the place of steam power—and if it is necessary to manufacture an additional quantity of products without the aid of these freely bestowed natural forces, there will *always* be a relative increase in the price of the products. Thirdly, we must examine the context in which this passage occurs. Marx discusses in this chapter differential rent obtained from the worst cultivated soil, and he examines *as always* two absolutely equivalent, *two absolutely equally possible* cases: the first case—increasing productivity of successive investments of capital (*S.* 274-76),[63] and the second case—decreasing productivity of such investments (*S.* 276-78).[64] In regard to the second of the possible cases, Marx says: "Concerning decreasing productiveness of the soil with successive investments of

capital, see Liebig.... *But*, *in general*, the following is to be noted" (our italics). There follows the passage "translated" by Mr. Bulgakov, stating that when what was formerly obtained gratis has now to be paid for, there is *always* a relative increase in the price of the product.

We shall leave it to the reader to judge the scientific conscientiousness of the Critic who turned Marx's remark about one of the possible cases into a recognition of this case by Marx as some sort of general "law".

And the following is the conclusion at which Mr. Bulgakov arrives concerning the passage he has discovered: "This passage, of course, is vague...." Of course! By substituting one word for another, Mr. Bulgakov has rendered it utterly meaningless! "... but it cannot be understood otherwise than as an indirect or even direct recognition [listen well!] of the law of diminishing returns. I am unaware that Marx has expressed himself openly on the latter in any other place" (I, 14). As an ex-Marxist, Mr. Bulgakov is "unaware" that Marx openly declared the assumptions of West, Malthus, and Ricardo—that differential rent presupposes a transition to worse land or diminishing returns—to be utterly false.* He is "unaware" that in the course of his voluminous analysis of rent Marx points out *scores of times* that he regards diminishing and increasing productivity of additional investments of capital as equally possible cases!

II

THE THEORY OF RENT

Mr. Bulgakov has completely failed to understand Marx's theory of rent. He is convinced that he has shattered this theory by the two following arguments: (1) According to Marx, agricultural capital enters into the equalisation of

* This false assumption of classical political economy, refuted by Marx, was adopted by the "Critic" Mr. Bulgakov, following on the heels of his teacher, Brentano, uncritically, of course. "The condition for the appearance of rent," Mr. Bulgakov writes, "is the law of diminishing returns" (I, 90). "... English rent ... as a matter of fact distinguishes successive investments of capital of varying and, as a rule, diminishing productivity" (I, 130).

the rate of profit, so that rent is created by a surplus profit that exceeds the average rate of profit. Mr. Bulgakov considers this to be false because the monopoly of land ownership eliminates free competition, which is necessary for the process of equalising the rate of profit. Agricultural capital does not enter into the process of equalising the rate of profit. (2) Absolute rent is merely a special case of differential rent, and it is erroneous to distinguish the one from the other. The distinction is based upon a completely arbitrary twofold interpretation of one and the same fact, namely, the monopoly ownership of one of the factors of production. Mr. Bulgakov is so convinced of the crushing effect of his arguments that he cannot refrain from pouring forth a stream of vehement words against Marx, such as *petitio principii*,* non-Marxism, logical fetishism, Marx's loss of capacity for mental flights, and so forth. And yet both those arguments are based on a rather crude error. The same one-sided vulgarisation of the subject which induced Mr. Bulgakov to raise one of the possible cases (diminishing productivity of additional investments of capital) to the level of the universal law of diminishing returns brings him in the present instance to employ the concept "monopoly" uncritically and to convert it into something universal. In doing so, he confuses the results which accrue under the capitalist organisation of agriculture from *the limitedness of land*, on the one hand, and from *private property in land*, on the other. These are two different things, as we shall explain.

"The *condition*, although not the source, of the appearance of ground-rent," writes Mr. Bulgakov, "is the same as that which gave rise to the possibility of the monopolisation of land—the fact that the productivity of the land is limited, while man's growing need for it is limitless" (I, 90). Instead of "the productivity of the land is limited", he should have said, "*land is limited*". (As we have shown, limitedness of the productivity of the land implies "limitedness" of the given technical level, the given state of the productive forces.) Under the capitalist system of society,

* An argument based on the conclusion from a proposition that has still to be proved.—*Ed.*

the limitedness of land does indeed presuppose monopolisation of land, *but of land as an object of economy and not as an object of property rights*. The assumption of the capitalist organisation of agriculture necessarily includes the assumption that all the land is occupied by separate private enterprises; *but it in no way includes the assumption* that the whole of the land is the private property of those farmers, or of other persons, or that it is, in general, private property. The monopoly of landownership based on property rights and the monopoly of the land economy are two entirely different things, not only logically, but historically. Logically, we can quite easily imagine a purely capitalist organisation of agriculture in which private property in land is entirely absent, in which the land is the property of the state, or of a village commune, etc. In actual practice we see that in all developed capitalist countries the whole of the land is occupied by separate, private enterprises; but these enterprises exploit not only their own lands, but also those rented from other landowners, from the state, or from village communes (e.g., in Russia, where, as is well known, the private enterprises established on peasant communal lands are principally capitalist peasant enterprises). Not without reason did Marx, at the very beginning of his analysis of rent, observe that the capitalist mode of production meets in its first stages (and subordinates to itself) the most varied forms of landed property: from clan property[65] and feudal landed property down to the property of the peasant commune.

Thus, the limitedness of land necessarily presupposes only the monopolisation of the economy of the land (under the domination of capitalism). The question arises: what are the necessary consequences of *this* monopolisation in relation to the problem of rent? The limitedness of land results in the price of grain being determined by the conditions of production, not on the average land, but on the worst land under cultivation. This price of grain enables the farmer (=the capitalist entrepreneur in agriculture) to cover his cost of production and gives him the average rate of profit on his capital. The farmer on the better land obtains an additional profit, which forms *differential rent*. The question as to whether private property in land exists

has nothing whatever to do with the question of the formation of differential rent, which is inevitable in capitalist agriculture even on communal, state, or non-private lands. The only consequence of the limitedness of land under capitalism is the formation of differential rent arising out of the difference in the productivity of various investments of capital. Mr. Bulgakov sees a second consequence in the elimination of free competition in agriculture when he says that the absence of this free competition prevents agricultural capital from participating in the formation of average profit. Obviously, he confuses the question of land cultivation with the right of property in land. The only thing that logically follows from the limitedness of land (irrespective of private property in land) is that the land will be entirely occupied by capitalist farmers; but it by no means follows that free competition among those farmers will necessarily be restricted in any way. Limitedness of land is a general phenomenon which inevitably leaves its impress upon the whole of capitalist agriculture. The logical unsoundness of confusing these different things is clearly confirmed by history. We shall not speak of England, where the separation of landownership from land cultivation is obvious, where free competition among farmers is almost limitless, where capital obtained from commerce and industry was and is invested in agriculture on the widest scale. But in all other capitalist countries (notwithstanding the opinion of Mr. Bulgakov, who, following Mr. Struve, vainly strives to place "English" rent in a special category) *the same process* of the separation of landownership from land cultivation is actual, although in extremely varied forms (leases, mortgages). In failing to see this process (strongly emphasised by Marx), Mr. Bulgakov has failed to see the main thing. In all European countries, after the fall of serfdom, we see the decay of landownership based on social-estates, the mobilisation of landed property, the investment of merchant and industrial capital in agriculture, an increase in tenant farming and an increase in the mortgaging of land. In Russia also, despite the most pronounced survivals of serfdom, we see after the Reform*

* The Reform of 1861 which abolished serfdom in Russia.—*Tr.*

increased purchasing of land by peasants, commoners, and merchants, and increased leasing of privately-owned, state, and *village communal* lands, etc., etc. What do all these phenomena prove? They prove that free competition has entered *agriculture—despite* the monopoly *of landed property* and regardless of the infinite variety of its forms. In all capitalist countries at the present time, every owner of capital can invest his money in agriculture (by purchasing or leasing land) as easily, or almost as easily, as he can invest in any branch of commerce or industry.

In arguing against Marx's theory of differential rent, Mr. Bulgakov says that "all these differences [differences in the conditions of the production of agricultural products] are contradictory and *may* [our italics] mutually eliminate one another; as Rodbertus pointed out, distance may be counteracted by fertility, different degrees of fertility may be equalised by more intensive cultivation of the more fertile plots" (I, 81). A pity, indeed, that our strict scientist should have forgotten that Marx noted this fact and was able to appraise it not so one-sidedly. Marx wrote: "... It is evident that these two different causes of differential rent—fertility and location [of plots of land]—may work in opposite directions. A certain plot of land may be very favourably located and yet be very poor in fertility, and vice versa. This circumstance is important, for it explains how it is possible that bringing into cultivation the land of a certain country may equally well proceed from the better to the worse land as vice versa. Finally, it is clear that the progress of social production in general has, on the one hand, the effect of evening out differences arising from location [of plots of land] as a cause of ground-rent, by creating local markets and improving locations by establishing communication and transportation facilities; on the other hand, it increases the differences in individual locations of plots of land by separating agriculture from manufacturing and forming large centres of production, on the one hand, while relatively isolating agricultural districts [*relative Vereinsamung des Landes*] on the other" (*Das Kapital*, III, 2, *S*. 190).[66] Thus, while Mr. Bulgakov triumphantly repeats the long known references to the *possibility* of the

mutual elimination of the differences, Marx presents the *further* problem of the transformation of this possibility into reality and shows that, simultaneously with equalising influences, there are to be observed differentiating influences. The final result of these mutually contradictory influences is, as everyone knows, that in all countries plots of land *differ* considerably both in fertility and in location. Mr. Bulgakov's objection merely reveals that he has not given any thought whatsoever to his observations.

Continuing his argument, Mr. Bulgakov says that the conception of the last and least productive investment of labour and capital is "employed uncritically by both Ricardo and Marx. It is not difficult to see what an arbitrary element is introduced by this conception: let the amount of capital invested in land be equal to $10a$, and let each successive a represent a diminishing productivity; the total product of the soil will be A. Obviously, the average productivity of each a will be equal to $A/10$; and if the total capital is regarded as a single whole, then the price will be determined precisely by this average productivity" (I, 82). Obviously, we say in reply to this, behind his florid phrases about the "limited productivity of the land" Mr. Bulgakov failed to see *a trifle*: the limitedness of land. This limitedness, irrespective of the form of *property* in land, creates a certain kind of monopoly, i.e., since all the land is occupied by farmers, and since there is a demand for the whole of the grain produced on the whole of the land, including the worst land and the remotest from the market, it is clear that the price of grain is determined by the price of production on the worst land (or the price of production connected with the last and least productive investment of capital). Mr. Bulgakov's "average productivity" is a futile exercise in arithmetic, for the limitedness of land prevents the actual formation of this average. For this "average productivity" to form and to determine the prices, every capitalist must, in general, not only be able to invest capital in agriculture (to the extent that free competition, as we have said, exists in agriculture), but he must be able at all times to establish *new* agricultural enterprises in addition to those already existing. If this were possible, there would be no difference whatever between agriculture and industry, and rent could

not come into existence. But precisely because of the limitedness of land, this is not the case.

To proceed. Until now we have pursued our argument without taking into account the question of property in land; we have seen that this method was necessary for logical considerations, as well as for the reason that historical data show that capitalist agriculture emerged and developed under various forms of landownership. Let us now introduce this new condition. Let us assume that all land is privately owned. How will this affect rent? Differential rent will be collected by the landowner from the farmer on the basis of his right of ownership. Since differential rent is the surplus profit over and above the normal, average profit on capital, and since free competition in the sense of the free investment of capital in agriculture exists (is being created by capitalist development), the landowner will always find a farmer who will be satisfied with the average profit and who will give him the surplus profit. Private property in land does not create differential rent; it merely transfers it from the hands of the farmer to the hands of the landowner. Is the influence of private landownership restricted to that? Can we assume that the landowner will permit the farmer to exploit *gratis* the worst and most inconveniently located land, which only produces the average profit on capital? Naturally, not. Landownership is a monopoly, and on the basis of this monopoly the landowner demands payment from the farmer for this land also. That payment will be *absolute rent*, which has no connection whatever with the difference in productivity of various investments of capital, and which *has its genesis in the private ownership of land*. In accusing Marx of making an arbitrary, twofold interpretation of the same monopoly, Mr. Bulgakov did not take the trouble to consider that we are actually dealing with a twofold monopoly. In the first place, we have the monopoly (capitalist) of land economy. This monopoly originates in the limitedness of land, and is therefore inevitable in any capitalist society. *This* monopoly leads to the determination of the price of grain by the conditions of production on the worst land; the surplus profit obtained by the investment of capital on better land, or by a more productive investment of capital, forms differential rent.

This rent comes into being quite independently of private property in land, which simply enables the landowner to take it from the farmer. In the second place, we have the monopoly of private property in land. Neither logically nor historically is this monopoly inseverably linked with the previous monopoly.* There is nothing in this monopoly that is *essential* to capitalist society and to the capitalist organisation of agriculture. On the one hand, we can quite easily conceive of capitalist agriculture without private property in land; indeed, many consistent bourgeois economists have demanded the nationalisation of land. On the other hand, even in practice we meet with the capitalist organisation of agriculture without private ownership of land, e.g., on state and village-commune lands. Consequently, it is necessary to distinguish between these two kinds of monopolies, as well as to recognise that absolute rent, which is *engendered* by private property in land, exists side by side with differential rent.**

* It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that we are dealing here with the general theory of rent and the capitalist organisation of agriculture; we do not, therefore, concern ourselves with facts like the antiquity and widespread character of private property in land, or the undermining of the last-mentioned form of monopoly, and partly of both its forms, by overseas competition, and so forth.

** In the second part of Volume II of *Theories of Surplus-Value* (*Theorien über den Mehrwert*, II. Band, II. Theil), published in 1905, Marx gives an explanation of absolute rent which confirms the correctness of my interpretation (particularly in regard to the two forms of monopoly). The following passages from Marx pertain to this interpretation: "If land were an unlimited element, not only in relation to capital and to population, but in actual fact, i.e., if it were as 'unlimited' as 'air and water', if it 'existed in unlimited quantities' [quotations from Ricardo], then the appropriation of land by one person could not in practice in any way exclude the appropriation of land by another person. In that case, private (as also 'public' and state) property in land could not exist. If, in addition, the land everywhere were of the same quality, no rent could be obtained for it.... The crux of the matter is—if land in relation to capital existed as a natural element, then capital in the sphere of agriculture would operate in the same way as it does in every other sphere of industry. There would then be no property in land and no rent.... On the other hand, if land is: (1) limited; and (2) appropriated—if property in land is a condition for the emergence of capital—and that is precisely the case in countries where capitalist production is developing; and in countries where this condition did not formerly exist (as in old Eu-

Marx explains the possibility of the formation of absolute rent from the surplus-value of agricultural capital by the fact that in agriculture the share of variable capital in the total composition of capital is above the average (a quite natural assumption in view of the undoubted backwardness of agricultural as compared with industrial technique). This being the case, it follows that the value of agricultural products, generally speaking, is higher than the cost of their production, and that surplus-value is higher than profit. The monopoly of private property in land, however, prevents this surplus from passing wholly into the process of equalising profits, and absolute rent is taken from this surplus.*

Mr. Bulgakov is greatly dissatisfied with this explanation and he exclaims: "What kind of thing is this surplus-value, which, like cloth or cotton, or some other commodity, can suffice or not suffice to cover a possible demand? In the first place, it is not a material thing, it is a concept, which serves to express a definite social relationship of production"

---

rope), capitalist production itself creates it, as in the United States—then land does not represent a field of activity accessible to capital in an elementary way. That is why absolute rent exists, apart from differential rent" (pp. 80-81).[67] Marx definitely draws a distinction here between the limitedness of land and the fact that land is private property. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

* We desire to say in passing that we have considered it necessary to deal in particular detail with Marx's theory of rent because we find that the interpretation Mr. P. Maslov gives of it is also incorrect ("The Agrarian Question", in *Zhizn*, Nos. 3 and 4, 1901). In that article, he regards the diminishing productivity of successive investments of capital, if not as a law, then at all events as the "usual" and as it were normal phenomenon, which he links with differential rent, and he rejects the theory of absolute rent. Mr. P. Maslov's interesting article contains many true remarks concerning the Critics, but it suffers greatly from the author's erroneous theory just referred to (while defending Marxism, he has not taken the trouble to define clearly the difference between "his own" theory and that of Marx), as well as from a number of careless and utterly unjust assertions, as for example, that Mr. Berdyaev "is completely liberating himself from the influence of bourgeois authors" and is distinguished for his "consistent class point of view, maintained without sacrificing objectivity"; that "in many respects Kautsky's analysis is in places ... tendentious"; that Kautsky "has completely failed to indicate in what direction the development of the productive forces in agriculture is proceeding"; and so forth.

(I, 105). This contrasting of a "material thing" to a "concept" is a striking example of the scholasticism which is now so freely offered in the guise of "criticism". What would be the use of a "concept" of the share of the social product if there were not definite "material things" corresponding to that concept? Surplus-value is the money equivalent of the surplus product, which consists of a definite share of cloth, cotton, grain, and of all other commodities (the word "definite" must not, of course, be understood in the sense that science can concretely define that share, but in the sense that the conditions which, in general outline, define the dimensions of this share are known). In agriculture, the surplus product is larger (in proportion to the capital) than in other branches of industry, and this surplus (which does not enter into the equalisation of profit owing to the monopoly of private property in land) may, naturally, "suffice or not suffice to cover the demand" of the monopolist landowner.

We shall not burden the reader with a detailed exposition of the theory of rent which Mr. Bulgakov has created, as he modestly remarks, "by his own efforts", "pursuing his own path" (I, 111). A few remarks will suffice to characterise this product of the "last and least productive investment" of professorial "effort". The "new" theory of rent is brewed according to the ancient recipe: "What is worth doing at all is worth doing thoroughly". Since free competition exists, then without any restrictions (although absolutely free competition has nowhere and at no time existed). Since monopoly exists, there is nothing more to be said. Consequently, rent is not taken from surplus-value, and not even from the agricultural product; it is taken from the product of non-agricultural labour; it is simply a tribute, a tax, a deduction from the total social product, a promissory note in favour of the landlord. "Agricultural capital, with its profit, and agricultural labour, agriculture in general as a sphere of investment for capital and labour, are therefore a *status in statu** in the kingdom of capitalism.... All [*sic*!] definitions of capital, surplus-value, wages, and value generally are imaginary quantities when applied to agriculture" (I, 99).

* A state within a state.—*Ed.*

So, now everything is clear: both capitalists and wage-workers in agriculture are imaginary quantities. But if Mr. Bulgakov at times wanders into the clouds, he, at others, argues not altogether irrationally. Fourteen pages farther on we read: "The production of agricultural products costs society a certain quantity of labour; that is the value of these products." Excellent. Consequently, at least the "definition" of value is not altogether an imaginary quantity. Farther we read: "Since production is organised on a capitalist basis, and since capital stands at the head of production, the price of grain will be determined by the price of production, that is, the productivity of the given labour and capital invested will be calculated according to average social productivity." Fine! Consequently, the "definitions" of capital, surplus-value, and wages are not altogether imaginary quantities. Consequently, free competition (although not absolutely free) exists; for unless capital could flow from agriculture into industry and vice versa, "the calculation of productivity according to average social productivity" would be impossible. Again: "The monopoly in land causes price to rise above value to the limits permitted by market conditions." Excellent! But where has Mr. Bulgakov seen that tribute, taxes, promissory notes, etc., are dependent upon market conditions? If the monopoly causes price to rise to the limits permitted by market conditions, then the only difference between the "new" theory of rent and the "old" is this: the author, pursuing "his own path", failed to understand the difference between the influence of the limitedness of land and the influence of private property in land, on the one hand, and the connection between the concept "monopoly" and the concept "the last and least productive investment of labour and capital", on the other. Is it surprising, therefore, that seven pages farther on (I, 120) Mr. Bulgakov should completely lose sight of "his own" theory and argue about the "method of distributing this [agricultural] product among the landowner, the capitalist farmer, and the agricultural labourers"? A brilliant finale to a brilliant criticism! A remarkable outcome of the new *Bulgakov theory of rent*, which, henceforth, will enrich the science of political economy!

III

MACHINERY IN AGRICULTURE

Let us now pass to what Mr. Bulgakov regards as the "remarkable" work of Hertz (*Die agrarischen Fragen im Verhältniss zum Sozialismus*, Wien, 1899.* Russian translation by A. Ilyinsky, St. Petersburg, 1900). We shall need, however, to spend a little time in simultaneously examining similar arguments by both authors.

The question of machinery in agriculture and the closely connected question of large- and small-scale production in agriculture most frequently provide the "Critics" with the occasion to "refute" Marxism. We shall later analyse some of the detailed data they present; for the present let us examine their general arguments. The Critics devote entire pages to arguing in detail that the use of machinery encounters greater difficulties in agriculture than in industry and for that reason machines are used to a smaller extent and have less significance. This is indisputable, and it was definitely shown, for example, by the same Kautsky whose name is enough to arouse Messrs. Bulgakov, Hertz, and Chernov to a state bordering on frenzy. But this indisputable fact does not in the least controvert the other fact that the use of machinery is developing rapidly in agriculture also, and that it has a powerful transforming effect upon it. All that the Critics can do is to "evade" this inevitable conclusion by such profound arguments as, "Agriculture is characterised by the domination of Nature in the process of production and by the lack of human free will" (Bulgakov, I, 43). "... instead of the uncertain and imprecise work of man, it [machinery in industry] performs micrometric as well as colossal work with mathematical precision. The machine cannot do the like [?] in the production of agricultural products because, to this day, this working instrument is not in the hands of man, but in the hands of Mother Nature. This is no metaphor" (ibid.). Indeed it is no metaphor; it is merely an empty phrase; for everyone knows that the steam plough, the seed-drill, the threshing-machine, etc., *make* work *more* "certain

* Friedrich Otto Hertz, *The Agrarian Question in Relation to Socialism*, Vienna, 1899.—*Ed.*

and precise"; consequently, to say, "cannot do the like", is simply to talk nonsense! Similarly, how can it be said that machinery in agriculture "cannot to any extent [*sic*!] revolutionise *production*" (Bulgakov, I, 43-44, where he quotes the opinion of agricultural machinery experts, who, however, merely refer to the relative difference between agricultural and industrial machinery), or that "not only cannot machinery convert the worker into its adjunct [?], but that the worker still retains his previous control of the process" (44)—as feeder of the threshing-machine, perhaps?

Mr. Bulgakov tries to belittle the superiority of the steam plough by references to Stumpfe and Kutzleb (who wrote of the ability of small-scale farming to compete with large-scale farming), as against the opinions of experts in agricultural machinery and agricultural economics (Fühling, Perels). He advances arguments to the effect that steam ploughing requires a special soil* and "extremely extensive estates" (in Mr. Bulgakov's opinion this is not an argument against small-scale farming, but against the steam plough!), and that with *12-inch* furrows the work of animals is *cheaper* than steam power, and so forth. One could fill tomes with such arguments, without, however, in the least refuting the fact that the steam plough has made extremely deep ploughing possible (furrows deeper than 12 inches), or the fact that its use has rapidly developed: in England, in 1867, only 135 estates were using steam ploughs, whereas in 1871 over 2,000 steam ploughs had come in to use (Kautsky); in Germany the number of farms using steam ploughs increased from 836 in 1882 to 1,696 in 1895.

On the question of agricultural machinery Mr. Bulgakov frequently cites Franz Bensing, whom he recommends as "the author of a special monograph on agricultural machinery" (I, 44). It would be most unfair if we did not in the present case show *how* Mr. Bulgakov quotes his authors, and *how* the very witnesses he calls testify against him.

---

* Hertz, with a particularly "triumphant" air, insists upon this, contending that the "absolute" judgement (*S.* 65, Russian translation, p. 156) that the steam plough is superior to the horse plough "under all circumstances" is false. This is precisely what is called forcing an open door!

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

In arguing that Marx's "construction" on the more rapid growth of constant capital as compared with variable capital is inapplicable to agriculture, Mr. Bulgakov points to the need of a larger expenditure of labour-power in proportion to the increase in the productivity of agriculture, and, among others, quotes the calculations made by Bensing: "The general amount of human labour required by the various systems of economy is expressed as follows: the three-field system—712 man-days; the Norfolk crop rotation system—1,615 man-days; crop rotation with a considerable production of sugar-beet—3,179 man-days per 60 hectares" (Franz Bensing, *Der Einfluss der landwirtschaftlichen Maschinen auf Volks- und Privatwirtschaft*,* Breslau, 1897, S. 42. Quoted by Bulgakov, I, 32). The unfortunate thing, however, is that by this calculation Bensing desired to prove that the role of machinery is growing. Applying these figures to German agriculture as a whole, Bensing calculates that the available agricultural workers would be sufficient to cultivate the land only on the three-field system, and that, consequently, the introduction of a crop rotation system would have been altogether *impossible* without machines. It is well known that when the old three-field system prevailed machinery was hardly utilised at all; consequently, Bensing's calculation proves the *opposite* of what Mr. Bulgakov tries to prove; this calculation shows that the growth of productivity of agriculture was necessarily accompanied by a more rapid growth of constant capital as compared with variable capital.

Elsewhere Mr. Bulgakov, after asserting that "a radical [*sic*!] difference exists between the role of machinery in the manufacturing industry and in agriculture", quotes the words of Bensing: "Agricultural machinery cannot effect an unlimited increase in production in the way machines in industry do..." (I, 44). Mr. Bulgakov is unlucky again. Bensing points to this by no means "radical" difference between agricultural and industrial machinery in the beginning of Chapter VI of his book, which is entitled: "The Influence of Agricultural Machinery on Gross Income". After making a de-

---

* *The Influence of Agricultural Machinery on National and Private Economy.—Ed.*

tailed analysis of the data relating to each special type of machine as published in agricultural literature and of his own findings obtained in a special inquiry, Bensing arrives at the following general conclusion: the increase in gross income obtained by the use of a steam plough is ten per cent, of a seed-drill ten per cent, and of a threshing-machine fifteen per cent; moreover, the seed-drill causes a saving of twenty per cent in seed; only the use of potato-digging machines shows a decline of five per cent in gross income. Mr. Bulgakov's assertion that "at all events, the steam plough is the only agricultural machine about which anything favourable can be said from the technical point of view" (I, 47-48) is *at all events* refuted by the very Bensing to whom incautious Mr. Bulgakov here refers.

In order to present the significance of machinery in agriculture as precisely and completely as possible, Bensing makes a number of detailed calculations of the results of farming carried on without machinery, with one machine, with two machines, and so forth, and, finally, with the use of all the important machines, including the steam plough and light railways (*Feldbahnen*). He found that in farming without the aid of machinery gross income amounted to 69,040 marks—expenditure, 68,615 marks, net income, 425 marks, or 1.37 marks per hectare. In farming that made use of all the important machines gross income amounted to 81,078 marks—expenditure, 62,551.5 marks, net income, 18,526.5 marks, or 59.76 marks per hectare, i.e., *more than forty times as much as in the first case.* That is the effect of machinery alone, for the system of cultivation is assumed to have remained unchanged. It goes without saying that the use of machinery is accompanied, as Bensing's calculations show, by an enormous increase in constant capital and a *diminution* in variable capital (i.e., in the capital expended on labour-power and in the number of workers employed). In short, Bensing's work entirely refutes Mr. Bulgakov and proves the superiority of large-scale production in agriculture, as well as the fact that the law of the growth of constant capital at the expense of variable capital is applicable to agriculture.

Only one thing makes Mr. Bulgakov akin to Bensing, and that is that the latter adopts the purely bourgeois point of

view, completely fails to understand the contradictions inherent in capitalism, and smugly pretends not to see that machines oust the worker, etc. This moderate and methodical pupil of the German professors speaks of Marx with a hatred to match Mr. Bulgakov's, except that Bensing is more consistent—he calls Marx "an opponent of machinery" in general, in both agriculture and industry, because, says he, Marx "distorts the facts" when he talks of the harmful effect machines have on the workers and attributes all sorts of misfortunes to machines (Bensing, *loc. cit.*, *S.* 4, 5, and 11). Mr. Bulgakov's attitude toward Bensing reveals to us again and again what the "Critics" take from the bourgeois scientists and what they pretend not to see.

The nature of Hertz' "criticism" is sufficiently revealed by the following example. On page 149 of his book (Russian translation) he charges Kautsky with employing "*feuilleton* methods", and on page 150 he "refutes" the assertion that large-scale production is superior to small-scale production in regard to the use of machinery, by the following arguments: (1) Machinery *is accessible* also to small farmers through the medium of co-operative societies. That, if you please, is supposed to refute the *fact* that machinery is used on a larger scale on big farms! On the question as to who has greater *access* to the benefits of co-operative organisation, we shall have a separate talk with Hertz in our second essay. (2) David has shown in *Sozialistische Monatshefte*[68] (Vol. V, No. 2) that the use of machinery on small farms "is extensive and is rapidly increasing ... that seed-drills are frequently [*sic*!] to be found even on very small farms. The same applies to mowers and other machines" (*S.* 63, Russian translation, p. 151). But if the reader turns to David's article,* he will see that the author takes the *absolute figures* of the number of farms using machinery, and not the percentage of those farms in relation to the total number of farms in the given category (as Kautsky does, of course).

Let us compare those figures, which are for the whole of Germany for 1895: **

* This faulty method is repeated in David's work *Socialism and Agriculture*, St. Petersburg, 1906, p. 179. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

** *Statistik des deutschen Reichs*, 112. Bd., *S.* 36 ★.

Groups of farms	Total number of farms	Farms using machinery					
		Seeding-machines	Per cent	Seed-drills	Per cent	Mowers and reapers	Per cent
Under 2 hectares	3,236,367	214	0.01	14,735	0.46	245	0.01
2 to 5 "	1,016,318	551	0.05	13,088	1.29	600	0.06
5 to 20 "	998,804	3,252	0.33	48,751	4.88	6,746	0.68
20 to 100 "	281,767	12,091	4.29	49,852	17.69	19,535	6.93
100 and over "	25,061	12,565	50.14	14,366	57.32	7,958	31.75
Totals	5,558,317	28,673	0.52	140,792	2.54	35,084	0.63

Confirmation indeed of the statement of David and Hertz that seeding-machines and mowers are "frequently" found "even on very small farms"! And if Hertz draws the "conclusion" that, "judged by statistics, Kautsky's assertion will not stand criticism", who is it that really employs *feuilleton* methods?

It should be pointed out as a curiosity that whereas the "Critics" deny the superiority of large-scale farming in regard to the use of machinery and deny the overwork and underconsumption caused by this fact in small farming, they outrageously contradict themselves when compelled to deal with the actual facts of the situation (and when they forget their "principal task"—to refute "orthodox" Marxism). Thus, in Volume II of his book (p. 115) Mr. Bulgakov says: "Large-scale farming always works with greater capital intensity than small-scale farming, and therefore, naturally, gives preference to the mechanical factors of production over live labour-power." That Mr. Bulgakov as a "Critic" should follow Messrs. Struve and Tugan-Baranovsky in their inclination towards vulgar political economy by contrasting mechanical "*factors* of production" to live factors is indeed quite "natural". But is it natural that he should so incautiously deny the superiority of large-scale farming?

On concentration in agricultural production Mr. Bulgakov can find no other words with which to express himself than "the mystical law of concentration", and so forth. But he comes up against the figures for England, and they show that a tendency towards the concentration of farms was

observed from the fifties to the end of the seventies. "Small subsistence farms combined into larger farms," writes Mr. Bulgakov. "*This* consolidation of land was by no means the result of the conflict between large-scale and small-scale production [?] but of a conscious [?!] striving on the part of the landlords to increase their rents by combining several small farms which provided them with very low rents into large farms capable of paying them larger rents" (I, 239). We are to understand from this: **Not** conflict between large-scale and small-scale farming, **but** the elimination of the latter, because it is less remunerative. "Since farming is established on a capitalist basis, it is indisputable that within certain limits large-scale capitalist farming possesses undoubted advantages over small-scale capitalist farming" (I, 239-40). If this is indisputable, why the clamour? Why did Mr. Bulgakov cry murder (in *Nachalo*) against Kautsky, who *begins* his chapter on large-scale and small-scale production (in his *Agrarian Question*) with the statement: "The more capitalistic agriculture becomes, the more qualitative becomes the difference in technique between large-scale and small-scale production"?

But not only the period of prosperity of English agriculture—also the period of crisis leads to conclusions unfavourable to small-scale farming. The reports of commissions published during recent years "with astonishing persistence assert that the crisis has most severely affected the small farmers" (I, 311). One report dealing with small owners says: "Their homes are worse than the average labourers' cottages.... All of them work astonishingly hard and for many more hours than the labourers, and many of them say that their material conditions are not so good as those of the latter, that they do not live as well and rarely eat fresh meat.... The yeomen, burdened with mortgages, were the first to go under..." (I, 316). "They stint themselves in all things as only few labourers do.... The small farmers keep going as long as they are able to avail themselves of the unpaid labour of the members of their families.... It is hardly necessary to add that the living conditions of the small farmers are far worse than those of the labourers" (I, 320-21). We have quoted these passages so that the reader may judge the correctness of the following conclusion drawn by Mr.

Bulgakov: "The severe ruination of the farms which had survived until the epoch of the agrarian crisis indicates merely [!!] that in such circumstances small producers succumb more quickly than large producers—and nothing more [*sic*!!]. It is utterly impossible to draw from this any general conclusion concerning the economic viability of small farms, for in that epoch the whole of English agriculture was insolvent" (I, 333). Isn't this priceless? And in the chapter dealing with the general conditions of development of peasant farming, Mr. Bulgakov even generalises this remarkable method of reasoning in the following manner: "A sudden drop in prices has a serious effect on all forms of production; but peasant production, having least capital at its disposal, is naturally less stable than large-scale production (which does not in the slightest affect the question of its general viability)" (II, 247). Thus, in capitalist society, enterprises having less capital at their disposal are less stable; but that does not affect their "general" viability!

Hertz is not more consistent in his reasoning. He "refutes" Kautsky (in the manner described above); but in discussing America he admits the superiority of large-scale farming in that country, which permits "the employment of machinery on a far larger scale than our parcellised farming permits" (*S*. 36, Russian translation, p. 93). He admits that "the European peasant, employing antiquated, routine methods of production, frequently toils [*robotend*] for a crust of bread like a labourer, without striving for anything better" (ibid.). Hertz admits generally that "small-scale production employs a relatively larger amount of labour than large-scale production" (*S*. 74, Russian translation, p. 177); he could well communicate to Mr. Bulgakov the data on the increase in yield resulting from the introduction of the steam plough (*S*. 67-68, Russian translation, pp. 162-63), etc.

The natural concomitant of our Critics' faulty theoretical reasoning on the significance of agricultural machinery is their helpless repetition of the views of downright reactionary agrarians who are opposed to machinery. Hertz, it is true, still hesitates on this delicate point; in speaking of the "difficulties" in the way of introducing machinery in agriculture, he observes: "The opinion is expressed that so much free time is left in the winter that hand threshing is

more profitable" (*S.* 65, Russian translation, pp. 156-57). Apparently, Hertz, with the logic peculiar to him, is inclined to draw the conclusion that this is an argument, not against small production, not against the capitalist obstacles to the introduction of machinery, but against machinery! It is not surprising that Mr. Bulgakov chides Hertz for being "too closely tied to the opinion of his party" (II, 287). The Russian professor, of course, is above such degrading "ties" and proudly declares: "I am sufficiently free from the prejudice so widespread—particularly in Marxist literature—according to which every machine must be regarded as progress" (I, 48). Unfortunately, the flight of imagination revealed in this magnificent piece of reasoning finds no correspondence in concrete conclusions. "The steam threshing-machine," writes Mr. Bulgakov, "which deprives very many workers of winter occupation, spelt for the labourers an undoubtedly serious evil uncompensated by technical advantages.* Goltz, incidentally, points this out and even gives expression to a utopian desire" (II, 103), i.e., the desire *to restric*t the use of threshing-machines, particularly steam threshers, "in order", adds he, "to improve the conditions of the agricultural labourers, as well as to reduce emigration and migration" (by migration Goltz, in all probability, means movement to the towns).

We shall remind the reader that this Goltzian idea was also noted by Kautsky in his *Agrarian Question*. It will not be without interest, therefore, to compare the attitude of the narrow orthodox Marxist, steeped in Marxist prejudices, with that of the latter-day Critic who has excellently assimilated the whole spirit of "criticism" towards a concrete question of economics (the significance of machines) and politics (not to be restricted?).

Kautsky says (*Agrarfrage*, *S.* 41) that Goltz ascribes a particularly "harmful influence" to the threshing-machine: it deprives the agricultural labourers of their principal

---

* Cf. Vol. 1, p. 51: "... the steam thresher ... performs the bulk of the work in winter when there is a scarcity of work as it is (consequently, the usefulness of the machine for agriculture as a whole [*sic*!!] is more than doubtful; we shall come across this fact again later on)."

winter occupation, drives them into the towns, and intensifies the depopulation of the countryside. Goltz proposes to restrict the use of the threshing-machine, and, Kautsky adds, proposes this "ostensibly in the interests of agricultural labourers, but in fact in the interests of the landlords, for whom," as Goltz himself says, "the loss resulting from such restriction will be amply compensated—if not immediately, then in the future—by the larger number of workers they will be able to obtain in the summer-time". "Fortunately," continues Kautsky, "this conservative friendship for the labourers is nothing more nor less than reactionary utopianism. The threshing-machine is of too great an 'immediate' advantage for the landlord to be induced to abandon its use for the sake of profits 'in the future'. And so, the thresher will continue to perform its revolutionary work; it will continue to drive the agricultural labourers into the towns, and as a result will become a powerful instrument for the raising of wages in the rural districts, on the one hand, and for the further development of the agricultural machine industry, on the other."

Mr. Bulgakov's attitude towards the problem as presented by a Social-Democrat and by an agrarian is very characteristic; it is an example in miniature of the position all the contemporary "Critics" occupy midway between the party of the proletariat and the party of the bourgeoisie. The Critic, of course, is not so narrow-minded and not so banal as to adopt the point of view of the class struggle and the revolutionising of all social relationships by capitalism. On the other hand, however, although our Critic "has grown wiser", the recollection of the time when he was "young and foolish", and shared the prejudices of Marxism, prevents him from adopting in its entirety the programme of his new comrade, the agrarian, who quite reasonably and consistently passes from the conclusion that machinery is harmful "for the *whole* of agriculture" to the desire to prohibit its use. And our good Critic finds himself in the position of Buridan's ass, between two bundles of hay. On the one hand, he has lost all understanding of the class struggle and is now capable of saying that machinery is harmful for "the *whole* of agriculture", forgetting that the *whole* of modern agriculture is conducted mainly by entrepreneurs, who are concerned only

about their profit; he has so far forgotten "the years of his youth", when he was a Marxist, that he now raises the extremely absurd question as to whether the technical advantages of machinery will "compensate" for its harmful effects upon the labourers (produced, not by the steam thresher alone, but by the steam plough, the mower, seed-sifter, etc.). He even fails to see that, in fact, the agrarian wants to enslave the labourer further both in winter and in summer. On the other hand, he vaguely recalls the obsolete, "dogmatic" prejudice that prohibiting machinery is utopian. Poor Mr. Bulgakov! Will he manage to extricate himself from this unpleasant situation?

It is interesting to note that in trying in every way to belittle the significance of agricultural machinery, and even making use of the "law of diminishing returns", our Critics have forgotten to mention (or have deliberately refrained from mentioning) the new technological revolution which electrical engineering is preparing in agriculture. But Kautsky, who, according to the extremely unfair judgement of Mr. P. Maslov, "committed a serious mistake in completely failing to indicate the course taken by the development of the productive forces in agriculture" (*Zhizn*, 1901, No. 3, p. 171), pointed to the significance of electricity in agriculture as far back as 1899 (in *Die Agrarfrage*). Today, the symptoms of the approaching technological revolution are much more distinct. Attempts are being made to elucidate theoretically the significance of electricity in agriculture (see Dr. Otto Pringsheim, *Landwirtschaftliche Manufaktur und elektrische Landwirtschaft*,* Brauns Archiv, XV, 1900, *S.* 406-18; and Kautsky's article in *Neue Zeit*,[69] XIX, 1, 1900-01, No. 18, "*Die Elektrizität in der Landwirtschaft*"**). Practical landlord farmers are describing their experiments in the application of electricity (Pringsheim cites a work by Adolf Seufferheld, who describes the experiments on his own farm). These landlords see in electricity a means of making agriculture once more remunerative. They call upon the government and the landlords to estab-

---

* *Agricultural Manufacture and Electrified Agriculture.—Ed.*
** "Electricity in Agriculture."—*Ed.*

lish central power stations and to organise the mass production of electricity for farmers. (Last year a work was published in Königsberg, written by P. Mack, an East-Prussian landlord, entitled *Der Aufschwung unseres Landwirtschaftsbetriebes durch Verbilligung der Produktionskosten. Eine Untersuchung über den Dienst, den Maschinentechnik und Elektrizität der Landwirtschaft bieten.**)

Pringsheim makes what in our opinion is a very true observation: that, in its general technological, and perhaps even economic, level, modern agriculture is at a stage of development which more than anything resembles the stage of industry Marx described as "manufacture". The predominance of hand labour and simple co-operation, the sporadic employment of machines, the relatively small extent of production (if we consider, for example, the total annual volume of products sold by a single enterprise), the relatively limited market for the most part, the connection between large- and small-scale production (the latter, like the handicraftsman in his relation to the big master-manufacturer, supplies the former with labour-power—or else the former buys up the "semi-finished articles" from the latter; thus, the big farmer buys beets, cattle, etc., from the small farmers)—all these are symptoms of the fact that agriculture has not yet reached the stage of real "large-scale machine industry" in the Marxian sense. In agriculture there is no "system of machines" as yet linked into one productive mechanism.

Of course, this comparison must not be carried too far. On the one hand, agriculture possesses certain peculiar features that cannot possibly be removed (if we leave aside the extremely remote and problematic possibility of producing protein and foods in laboratories). Owing to these peculiarities, large-scale machine production will never manifest in agriculture *all* the features it possesses in industry. On the other hand, even in the manufacture stage of development large-scale production in industry reached predominance and considerable technical superiority over small-scale produc-

* *The Rise in Our Agriculture Through Reduced Cost of Production. An Inquiry into the Services Offered to Agriculture by Mechanical Engineering and Electricity.—Ed.*

tion. For a long time the small producer tried to counteract this superiority by the lengthened working day and curtailed consumption which are so characteristic of the handicraftsman and of the modern small peasant. The predominance of hand labour in the manufacture stage enabled the small producer to hold his own for a time by "heroic" measures such as these. But those who were deceived by this and talked about the viability of the handicraftsman (even as our contemporary Critics talk of the viability of the peasant) very soon found themselves refuted by the "temporary tendency" which paralysed the "universal law" of technological stagnation. Let us recall, for instance, the Russian investigators into the handicraft weaving industry in Moscow Gubernia in the seventies. As far as cotton weaving was concerned, they said, the hand weaver was doomed; the machine had triumphed. The handicraft silk weaver, however, may still hold his own for a time, the machinery being still far from perfect. Two decades have passed, and machinery has driven the small producer from still another of his last refuges, as if telling those who have ears to hear and eyes to see that the economist must always look forward, towards technological progress, or else be left behind at once; for he who will not look ahead turns his back on history; there is not and there cannot be any middle path.

"Writers who, like Hertz, in treating of competition between small- and large-scale production in agriculture ignored electrical engineering, must start their investigation all over again," aptly remarked Pringsheim, which remark applies with still greater force to Mr. Bulgakov's two-volume work.

Electricity is cheaper than steam power. It is more easily divisible into small units, it can be more easily transmitted over very long distances; machinery powered by electricity runs more smoothly and precisely, and for that reason it is more convenient to use it in threshing, ploughing, milking, cutting fodder,* etc. Kautsky describes one of the Hungar-

* This is for the information of our bold Mr. Bulgakov, who boldly and groundlessly speaks of "branches of agricultural production in which machinery cannot be used at all, as, for example, livestock farming" (I, 49).

ian latifundia* in which electricity is transmitted from a central station in all directions to the remote parts of the estate and is used for running agricultural machinery, for chopping mangels, for raising water, for lighting, etc., etc. "In order to pump 300 hectolitres a day from a well 29 metres deep into a reservoir 10 metres high, and in order to prepare fodder for 240 cows, 200 calves, and 60 oxen and horses, i.e., for chopping mangels, etc., two pairs of horses were required in the winter and one pair in the summer, at a cost of 1,500 gulden. Now, the horses have been replaced by a three and a five h.p. motor costing altogether 700 gulden to maintain, which represents a saving of 800 gulden" (Kautsky, loc. cit.). Mack calculates the cost of a horse-workday at 3 marks; but if the horse is replaced by electricity the cost is 40 to 75 pfennigs, i.e., four to seven times cheaper. If in 50 years or more from now, he says, 1,750,000 of the horses used in German agriculture were supplanted by electricity (in 1895, 2,600,000 horses, 1,000,000 oxen, and 2,300,000 cows were used for field work in German agriculture, of which 1,400,000 horses and 400,000 oxen were used on farms exceeding 20 hectares in area), expenses would be reduced from 1,003,000,000 marks to 261,000,000 marks, i.e., by 742,000,000 marks. An enormous area of land now utilised for raising cattle feed could then be turned to the production of food—for the improvement of the food of the workers, whom Mr. Bulgakov tries so much to scare with the prospect of the "diminution of the gifts of Nature", "the grain problem", and so forth. Mack strongly recommends the uniting of agriculture with industry for the permanent exploitation of electricity; he recommends the cutting of a Mazurian canal to provide power for five power stations which would distribute electricity to farmers within a radius of 20-25 kilometres. He recommends the use of peat for the same purpose, and demands the association of farmers: "Only in co-operative association with industry and big capital is it possible to make our branch of industry profitable once again" (Mack, *S.* 48). Of course, the employment of new methods of production will encounter many difficulties; it will

* Again for the information of Mr. Bulgakov, who talks of "the latifundian degeneration of large-scale farming"!

not proceed in a straight line, but in zigzag fashion; however, that the employment of new methods will take place, that the revolution in agriculture is inevitable, can hardly be doubted. "The substitution of electric motors for the majority of draught animals," rightly says Pringsheim, "means opening up the possibility of the machine system in agriculture.... What could not be achieved by steam power will certainly be achieved by electrical engineering, namely, the advancement of agriculture from the old manufacture stage to modern large-scale production" (loc. cit., p. 414.)

We shall not dilate upon the enormous victory the introduction of electrical engineering in agriculture will represent (and partly already represents) for large-scale production; it is too obvious to require emphasis. It will be better to see which modern farms contain the rudiments of this "machine system" that will be set in motion by a central power station. Before the machine system can be introduced, it is first of all necessary to test various kinds of machines, to conduct experiments with many combinations of machines. The information we require can be found in the returns of the German agricultural census of June 14, 1895. We have figures showing the number of farms in each category that used their own or hired machines. (Mr. Bulgakov, when citing some of these figures on page 114, Vol. II, erroneously takes them to apply to the number of *machines* used. In passing, it may be said that the statistics on the number of farms using machines, their own or hired, naturally bring out the superiority of large-scale farming to a smaller extent than is really the case. Big farmers have their own machines more often than small farmers, who are obliged to pay exorbitant prices for the hire of machines.) The data relate to the use either of machines in general, or of a certain kind of machine, so that we are not able to determine *whole* machines the farms in each group use. But if for each group we compute the number of farms using each separate kind of machine, we shall obtain *the number of cases* in which agricultural machines of all kinds are *used*. The following table presents the data drawn up in this manner and shows how the ground is being prepared for the "machine system" in agriculture.

Size of farms	Per hundred farms	
	Number of farms that used agricultural machines generally (1895)	Number of instances in which some kind of agricultural machine was used (1895)
Under 2 hectares . . .	2.03	2.30
2 to 5 " . . .	13.81	15.46
5 to 20 " . . .	45.80	56.04
20 to 100 " . . .	78.79	128.46
100 and over " . . .	94.16	352.34
Average . . .	16.36	22.36

Thus, in small farms under five hectares (these comprise more than three-fourths of the total in this group, viz., 4,100,000 out of 5,500,000, or 75.5 per cent; but they account for only 5,000,000 hectares out of a total of 32,500,000 hectares, or 15.6 per cent), the number of *cases* in which agricultural machines of any type are used (we have included dairy machinery) is quite insignificant. Of the medium farms (from 5 to 20 hectares) fewer than half use machines generally, while the number of instances showing use of agricultural machines represents only 56 per hundred farms. Only under large-scale capitalist production* do we see the *majority* of farms (from three-quarters to nine-tenths) using machinery and *the beginning of the establishment of a machine system*: on every farm there is more than one case of use of machinery. This means that several machines are used on a single farm: for example, farms of over 100 hectares use *about four machines* each (352 per cent as compared with 94 per cent using machines generally). Of 572 latifundia (farms of 1,000 hectares and over), 555 use machines; and the number of cases in which machines were used is 2,800, i.e., each farm used *five machines*. It is clear from this which farms are preparing the ground for the "electrical" revolution and which will mostly take advantage of it.

* Over 20 hectares only 300,000 farms out of 5 500,000, i.e., only 5.5 per cent of the total, but they occupy 17,700,000 hectares of land out of 32,500,000, or 54.4 per cent of the total farmland.

IV

THE ABOLITION OF THE ANTITHESIS BETWEEN TOWN AND COUNTRY. PARTICULAR QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE "CRITICS"

From Hertz let us pass to Mr. Chernov. As the latter merely "talks with his readers" about the former, we shall confine ourselves here to a brief description of Hertz' method of argument (and Mr. Chernov's method of paraphrasing him), and (in the next essay) take up certain new facts advanced by the "Critics".

It will suffice to cite but a *single* example to show the sort of theoretician Hertz is. At the very beginning of his book we find a paragraph under the pretentious heading, "The Concept of National Capitalism". Hertz wants nothing more nor less than to present a definition of capitalism. He writes: "We can, of course, characterise it as a system of national economy which rests *juridically* on the completely applied principles of freedom of the person and of property, *technically* on production on a wide [large?] scale,* *socially* on the alienation of the means of production from the direct producers, *politically* on the possession by the capitalists of the central political power [the concentrated political power of the state?] ... solely on the economic basis of the distribution of property" (Russian translation, p. 37). These definitions are incomplete, and certain reservations must be made, says Hertz; for example, domestic industry and small tenant farming still persist everywhere side by side with large-scale production. "The *realistic* [*sic*!] definition of capitalism as a system under which production is under the control [domination and control] of capitalists [owners of capital] is likewise not quite suitable." A fine "realistic" definition of capitalism as the domination of capitalists! How characteristic it is—this now fashionable, quasi-realistic, but in fact eclectic quest for an exhaustive enumeration of all the separate symptoms and separate "factors". The result, of

* Mr. V. Chernov translates it (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 4, p. 132): "on production which has achieved a high state of development". That is how he contrived to "understand" the German expression "*auf grosser Stufenleiter*"!!

course, is that this meaningless attempt to include into a general concept all the partial symptoms of single phenomena, or, conversely, to "avoid conflict with extremely varied phenomena"—an attempt that merely reveals an elementary failure to understand what science is—leads the "theoretician" to a point where he cannot see the wood for the trees. Thus, Hertz lost sight of such a detail as commodity production and the transformation of labour-power into a commodity! Instead, he invented the following *genetic* definition, which—as punishment for the inventor—ought to be quoted in full: Capitalism is "that state of national economy in which the realisation of the principles of free exchange and freedom of the person and of property has reached its (relative) high point which is determined by the economic development and the empirical conditions of each separate national economy" (*S.* 10, Russian translation, pp. 38-39, not quite exact). Filled with awe and admiration, Mr. Chernov, of course, transcribes and describes this twaddle, and, moreover, treats the readers of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* for the space of thirty pages to an "analysis" of the types of national capitalism. From this highly instructive analysis we can extract a number of extremely valuable and by no means stereotyped references, for example, to the "independent, proud, and energetic character of the Briton"; to the "substantial" English bourgeoisie and the "unattractiveness" of their foreign policy; to the "passionate and impulsive temperament of the Latin race" and to the "methodicalness of the Germans" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 4, p. 152). "Dogmatic" Marxism, of course, is utterly annihilated by this analysis.

No less annihilating is Hertz' analysis of mortgage statistics. At all events, Mr. Chernov goes into ecstasies over it. "The fact is," he writes, "...Hertz' figures have not yet been refuted by anyone. Kautsky, in his reply to Hertz, dwelt at extreme length upon certain details [such as his proof of Hertz' *distortions*—a fine 'detail'!], but to Hertz' argument on the question of mortgages *he made no reply whatever*" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 10, p. 217, Mr. Chernov's italics). As can be seen from the reference on page 238 in the cited issue of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, Mr. Chernov is aware of the article Kautsky wrote in reply ("*Zwei Kritiker meiner*

Agrarfrage",* in *Neue Zeit*, 18, 1, 1899-1900). Mr. Chernov could not but know, too, that the periodical in which the article appeared is prohibited in Russia by the censor. The more noteworthy, therefore, as characterising the features of the modern "Critics", is the fact that the very words which Chernov himself underlines contain *a flagrant untruth*; for on the question of mortgages Kautsky *replied* to "Hertz, David, Bernstein, Schippel, Bulgakov, *e tutti quanti*",** on pp. 472-77, *in the selfsame article to which Mr. Chernov refers*. To rectify distorted truth is a tedious duty; but since we have to deal with the Messrs. Chernov, it is a duty not to be neglected.

Kautsky, of course, replied to Hertz with ridicule; for in regard to this question too Hertz revealed his inability, or unwillingness, to understand what is what and an inclination to repeat the threadbare arguments of bourgeois economists. Kautsky in his *Agrarfrage* (*S*. 88-89) dealt with the concentration of mortgages. "Numerous petty village usurers," wrote Kautsky, "are being forced more and more into the background, forced to yield to big centralised capitalist or public institutions which monopolise mortgage credit." Kautsky enumerates certain capitalist and public institutions of this type; he speaks of mutual land credit societies (*genossenschaftliche Bodenkreditinstitute*) and points to the fact that *savings-banks*, insurance companies, and many corporations (*S*. 89) invest their funds in mortgages, etc. Thus, until 1887, seventeen mutual credit societies in Prussia had issued mortgage bonds to the amount of 1,650,000,000 marks. "These figures show how enormously ground-rent is concentrated in the hands of *a few central institutions* [our italics]; but this concentration is rapidly increasing. In 1875 German mortgage banks issued mortgage bonds to the amount of 900,000,000 marks and in 1888 to the amount of 2,500,000,000 marks, while in 1892 the amount reached a total of 3,400,000,000 marks, concentrated in 31 banks (as against 27 in 1875)" (*S*. 89). This concentration of ground-rent is a clear indication of the concentration of *landed property*.

---

* "Two Critics of My *Agrarian Question*."—*Ed*.

** Kautsky's expression, p. 472 of *Neue Zeit*. (*E tutti quanti*—and all others of their stripe.—*Ed*.)

"No!" retort Hertz, Bulgakov, Chernov & Co. "We find a very decided tendency towards decentralisation and the break-up of property" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 10, p. 216); for "more than a fourth of the mortgage credits are concentrated in the hands of democratic [*sic*!] credit institutions with a vast number of small depositors" (ibid.). Presenting a series of tables, Hertz attempts with extraordinary zeal to prove that the bulk of the depositors in savings-banks, etc., are *small depositors*. The only question is—what is the purpose of this argument? Kautsky himself referred to the mutual credit societies and savings-banks (while not, of course, imagining, as does Mr. Chernov, that they are particularly "democratic" institutions). Kautsky speaks of the centralisation of rent in the hands of a few central institutions, and he is met with the argument about the large number of small depositors in savings-banks!! And this they call "the break-up of property"! What has the number of depositors in mortgage banks to do with agriculture (the subject under discussion being the concentration of rent)? Does a big factory cease to signify the centralisation of production because its shares are distributed among a large number of small capitalists? "Until Hertz and David informed me," wrote Kautsky in his reply to the former, "I had not the slightest idea where the savings-banks obtained their money. I thought they operated with the savings of the Rothschilds and the Vanderbilts."

In regard to transferring mortgages to the state, Hertz says: "This would be the poorest way of fighting big capital, but, of course, the best means of arousing the large and constantly increasing army of the smallest property-owners, particularly the agricultural labourers, against the proponents of such a reform" (*S*. 29, Russian translation, p. 78. Mr. Chernov smugly repeats this on pp. 217-18 of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*).

These then are the "property-owners" over whose increase Bernstein & Co. get so wrought up!—retorts Kautsky. Servant girls with twenty marks in the savings-bank! And again we have the threadbare argument employed against the socialists that by "expropriation" they will rob a large army of working people. None other than Eugen Richter zealously advanced this argument in the pamphlet he published after the repeal of the Exceptional Law Against the

Socialists[70] (and which employers bought up by the thousands to distribute gratis among their workers). In that pamphlet Richter introduces his celebrated "thrifty Agnes", a poor seamstress who had a score or so of marks in the savings-bank and was robbed by the wicked socialists when they seized political power and nationalised the banks. That is the source from which the Bulgakovs,* Hertzes, and Chernovs draw their "critical" arguments.

"At that time," says Kautsky, concerning Eugen Richter's "celebrated" pamphlet, "Eugen Richter was unanimously ridiculed by all Social-Democrats. Now we find people among the latter who, in our central organ [this, I think, refers to David's articles in *Vorwärts*],[71] sing a hymn of praise to a work in which these very ideas are reproduced. Hertz, we extol thy deeds!

"For poor Eugen, in the decline of his years, this is indeed a triumph, and I cannot refrain from quoting for his pleasure the following passage from that very page in Hertz' book: 'We see that the small peasants, the urban house-owners, and especially the big farmers, are expropriated by the lower and middle classes the bulk of which undoubtedly consists of the rural population"' (Hertz, *S.* 29, Russian translation, p. 77. Retold with rapture in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 10, pp. 216-17). "David's theory of 'hollowing out' [*Aushöhlung*] capitalism by collective wage agreements [*Tarifgemeinschaften*] and consumers' co-operative societies is now excelled. It pales into insignificance before Hertz' expropriation of the expropriators by means of savings-banks. Thrifty Agnes, whom everybody considered dead, has come to life again" (Kautsky, loc. cit., *S.* 475), and the Russian "Critics", together with the publicists of *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, hasten to transplant this resurrected "thrifty Agnes" to Russian soil in order to discredit "orthodox" Social-Democracy.

And this very Mr. V. Chernov, spluttering with enthusiasm over Hertz' repetition of Eugen Richter's arguments, "annihilates" Kautsky in the pages of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* and in the symposium. *At the Glorious Post*, compiled in honour of Mr. N. Mikhailovsky. It would be unfair not to present some

* Mr. Bulgakov resorted to this argument against Kautsky with regard to the question of mortgages, in *Nachalo*, and in German, in Braun's *Archiv*.

of the gems of this tirade. "Kautsky, again following Marx," writes Mr. Chernov in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 8, p. 229, "admits that the progress of capitalist agriculture leads to the reduction of nutritive matter in the soil: in the form of various products, something is continuously being taken from the land, sent to the towns, and never restored to the land.... As you see, on the question of the laws of the fertility of the soil, Kautsky helplessly [*sic*!] repeats the words of Marx, who bases himself upon the theory of Liebig. But when Marx wrote his first volume, Liebig's 'law of restoration' was the last word in agronomics. More than half a century has elapsed since that discovery. A complete revolution has taken place in our knowledge of the laws governing soil fertility. And what do we see? The whole post-Liebig period, all the subsequent discoveries of Pasteur and Ville, Solari's experiments with nitrates, the discoveries of Berthelot, Hellriegel, Wilfahrt, and Vinogradsky in the sphere of the bacteriology of the soil—all this is beyond Kautsky's ken...." Dear Mr. Chernov! How wonderfully he resembles Turgenev's Voroshilov: you remember him in *Smoke*, the young Russian *Privatdocent* who went on a tour abroad. This Voroshilov was a very taciturn young man; but now and again he would break his silence and pour forth scores and hundreds of the most learned of names, the rarest of the rare. Our learned Mr. Chernov, who has utterly annihilated that ignoramus Kautsky, behaves in exactly the same manner. Only ... only had we not better consult Kautsky's book—glance at least at its chapter headings? We come to Chapter IV: "Modern Agriculture", section *d*, "Fertilisers, *Bacteria*". We turn to section *d* and read:

"Towards the end of the last decade the discovery was made that leguminous plants ... unlike other cultivated plants, obtain nearly the whole of their nitrogen supply, not from the soil, but from the air, and that far from robbing the soil of nitrogen they enrich it. But they possess this property only when the soil contains certain micro-organisms which adhere to their roots. Where these micro-organisms do not exist, it is possible by means of certain inoculations to give these leguminous plants the property of converting soil poor in nitrogen into nitrogen-rich soil, and in this way to fertilise this soil to a certain extent for other crops. As a general

rule, by inoculating bacteria into these plants and by using a suitable mineral fertiliser (phosphoric acid salts and potash fertilisers), it is possible to obtain the highest steady yields from the soil even without stable manure. Only thanks to this discovery has 'free farming' acquired a really firm basis" (Kautsky, pp. 51-52). Who, however, gave a scientific basis to the remarkable discovery of nitrogen-gathering bacteria?—Hellriegel....

Kautsky's fault is his bad habit (possessed by many of the narrow orthodox) of never forgetting that members of a militant socialist party must, even in their scientific works, keep the working-class reader in mind, that they must strive to write *simply*, without employing unnecessary clever turns of phrase and those outer symptoms of "learning" which so captivate decadents and the titled representatives of official science. In this work, too, Kautsky preferred to relate in a clear and simple manner the latest discoveries in agronomics and to omit scientific names that mean nothing to nine-tenths of the readers. The Voroshilovs, however, act in precisely the opposite manner; they prefer to effuse a veritable stream of scientific names in the domains of agronomics, political economy, critical philosophy, etc., and thus bury essentials under this scientific lumber.

Thus, Voroshilov-Chernov, by his slanderous accusation that Kautsky is not acquainted with scientific names and scientific discoveries, blocked from view an extremely interesting and instructive episode in fashionable criticism, namely, the attack of bourgeois economics upon the socialist idea of abolishing the antithesis between town and country. Prof. Lujo Brentano, for instance, asserts that migration from the country to the towns is caused, not by given social conditions, but by *natural necessity*, by the law of diminishing returns.* Mr. Bulgakov, following in the foot-

* See Kautsky's article "Tolstoi und Brentano" in *Neue Zeit*, XIX, 2, 1900-01, No. 27. Kautsky compares modern scientific socialism with the doctrines of Lev Tolstoi, who has always been a profound observer and critic of the bourgeois system, notwithstanding the reactionary naïveté of his theory, and bourgeois economics whose "star" Brentano (the teacher, as we know, of Messrs. Struve, Bulgakov, Hertz, *e tutti quanti*), betrays the most incredible muddle-headedness in confounding natural with social phenomena, in confounding the concept of productivity with that of profitability, the concept

steps of his teacher, stated in *Nachalo* (March 1899, p. 29) that the idea of abolishing the antithesis between town and country was "an absolute fantasy", which would "cause an agronomist to smile". Hertz writes in his book: "The abolition of the distinction between town and country is, it is true, the principal striving of the old utopians [and even of the *Manifesto*]. Nevertheless, we do not believe that a social system containing all the conditions necessary for directing human culture to the highest aims achievable would really abolish such great centres of energy and culture as the big cities and, to soothe offended aesthetic sentiments, abandon these abundant depositories of science and art, without which progress is impossible" (*S.* 76. The Russian translator, on p. 182, rendered the word "*potenziert*"* as "potential". These Russian translations are an awful nuisance! On page 270, the same translator translates the sentence, "*Wer isst zuletzt das Schwein*?"** as "Who, in the end, is the pig?"). As can be seen, Hertz defends the bourgeois system from socialist "fantasies" with phrases that convey the "struggle for idealism" no less than do the writings of Messrs. Struve and Berdyaev. But his defence is not in the least strengthened by this bombastic, idealistic phrase-mongering.

---

of value with that of price, etc. "This is not so characteristic of Brentano personally," Kautsky says justly (p. 25), "as of the *school* to which he belongs. The *historical school* of bourgeois economics, in its modern form, regards the striving towards an integral conception of the social mechanism as being a superseded standpoint [*überwundener Standpunkt*]. According to this view, economic science must not investigate social laws and combine them into an integral system, but must confine itself to the formal description of separate social facts of the past and the present. Thus, it accustoms one to swim merely on the surface of things; and when a representative of this school, nevertheless, succumbs to the temptation to get to the bottom of things, he finds himself out of his depth and flounders helplessly round and round. In our party, too, there has been observed for some time a tendency to substitute for the Marxist theory, not some other theory, but that absence of all theory [*Theorielosigkeit*] which distinguishes the historical school—a tendency to degrade the theoretician to the position of a mere reporter. To those who desire, not simply an aimless skipping [*Fortwurschteln*] from instance to instance, but an integral, energetic movement forward towards a great goal, the Brentano confusion which we have exposed must serve as a warning against the present methods of the historical school."

* Raised to a higher power, abundant.—*Ed.*

** Who, in the end, eats the pig?—*Ed.*

The Social-Democrats have proved that they know how to appreciate the historic services of the great centres of energy and culture by their relentless struggle against all that encroaches on the freedom of movement of the population generally and of the peasants and agricultural labourers in particular. That is why no agrarian can trap them, as he can the Critics, with the bait of providing the "muzhik" with winter "employment". The fact that we definitely recognise the progressive character of big cities in capitalist society, however, does not in the least prevent us from including in our ideal (and in our programme of action, for we leave unattainable ideals to Messrs. Struve and Berdyaev) the abolition of the antithesis between town and country. It is not true to say that this is tantamount to abandoning the treasures of science and art. Quite the contrary: this is necessary in order to bring these treasures *within the reach of the entire people*, in order to abolish the alienation from culture of millions of the rural population, which Marx aptly described as "the idiocy of rural life".[72] And at the present time, when it is possible to transmit electric power over long distances, when the technique of transport has been so greatly improved that it is possible at less cost (than at present) to carry passengers at a speed of more than 200 versts an hour,* there are absolutely no technical obstacles to the enjoyment of the treasures of science and art, which for centuries have been concentrated in a few centres, by the whole of the population spread more or less evenly over the entire country.

And if there is nothing to prevent the abolition of the antithesis between town and country (not be imagined, of course, as a single act but as a series of measures), it is not an "aesthetic sentiment" alone that demands it. In the big cities people suffocate with the fumes of their own excrement, to use Engels' expression, and periodically all who can, flee from the cities in search of fresh air and pure water.[73] Industry is also spreading over the countryside; for it, too, requires pure water. The exploitation of waterfalls, canals,

* The proposal to construct such a road between Manchester and Liverpool was rejected by Parliament only because of the selfish opposition of the big railway magnates, who feared that the old companies would be ruined.

and rivers to obtain electric power will give a fresh impetus to this "spreading out of industry". Finally—*last, but not least**—the rational utilisation of city refuse in general, and human excrement in particular, so essential for agriculture, also calls for the abolition of the antithesis between town and country. It is against this point in the theory of Marx and Engels that the Critics decided to direct their agronomical arguments (the Critics preferred to refrain from fully analysing the theory, which is dealt with in great detail in Engels' *Anti-Dühring*,[74] and, as usual, limited themselves simply to paraphrasing fragments of the thoughts of a Brentano). Their line of reasoning is as follows: Liebig proved that it is necessary to restore to the soil as much as is taken from it. He was therefore of the opinion that throwing city refuse into the seas and rivers was a stupid and barbarous waste of materials essential for agriculture. Kautsky agrees with Liebig's theory. *But* modern agronomics has proved that it is quite possible to restore the productive forces of the soil without the use of stable manure, namely, by means of artificial fertilisers, by the inoculation of certain bacteria into leguminous plants which collect nitrates, etc. *Consequently*, Kautsky, and all those "orthodox" people, are simply behind the times.

Consequently—we reply—here, too, the Critics commit one of their innumerable and endless *distortions*. After explaining Liebig's theory, Kautsky *immediately* showed that modern agronomics has proved that it is quite possible "to dispense altogether with stable manure" (*Agrarfrage*, *S.* 50; see passage quoted above), but added that this was merely a *palliative* compared with the waste of human excrement entailed by the present system of city sewage disposal. Now, if the Critics were at all capable of discussing the essential points of the question, this is the point they should have disproved; they should have shown that it is not a palliative. But they did not even think of doing so. Needless to say, the possibility of substituting artificial for natural manures and the fact that this is already being done (*partly*) do not in the least refute the irrationality of wasting natural fertilisers and thereby polluting the rivers and the air

* These words are in English in the original.—*Ed.*

in suburban and factory districts. Even at the present time there are sewage farms in the vicinity of large cities which utilise city refuse with enormous benefit to agriculture; but by this system only an infinitesimal part of the refuse is utilised. To the objection that modern agronomics has refuted the argument that the cities agronomically exploit the countryside, with which the Critics present Kautsky as something new, he replies, on page 211 of his book, that artificial fertilisers "render it possible to avoid the diminution of soil fertility, but the necessity to employ them to an increasing extent merely indicates still another of the numerous burdens agriculture has to bear, which *are by no means a natural necessity, but a product of existing social relations*".*

The words we have emphasised contain the "pivot" of the question which the Critics so zealously confuse. Writers like Mr. Bulgakov try to scare the proletariat with the bogy that the "grain question" is more terrible and important than the social question; they are enthusiastic over birth control and argue that "control of the increase of the population" is becoming "the fundamental [*sic*!] economic condition" for the prosperity of the peasantry (II, 261), that this control is worthy of "respect", and that "much hypocritical indignation [only hypocritical, not legitimate, indignation against the present social system?] is roused among sentimental [?!] moralists by the increase in births among the peasant population, as if unrestrained lust [*sic*!] were in itself a virtue" (ibid.). Such writers must naturally and inevitably strive to keep in the background the *capitalist* obstacles to agricultural progress, to throw the entire blame for everything upon the natural "law of diminishing returns", and to present the idea of abolishing the antithesis between town and country as "pure fantasy". But what utter irresponsibility the Chernovs betray when they repeat such arguments and at the same time reproach the Critics of Marxism for "lacking principles and for being eclectics and opportunists" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 11, p. 246)?! What spectacle could be more comical

* "It goes without saying," continues Kautsky, "that artificial fertilisers will not disappear with the fall of capitalism; but they will enrich the soil with special materials and not fulfil the *whole* task of restoring its fertility."

than that of Mr. Chernov reproving others for lack of principles and for opportunism.

All the other critical exploits of our Voroshilov are identical to what we have just examined.

Voroshilov assures us that Kautsky fails to understand the difference between capitalist credit and usury; that he betrays utter failure, or unwillingness, to understand Marx, in maintaining that the peasant fulfils the functions of entrepreneur and, as such, stands in the same relation to the proletariat as the factory owner. Beating his breast, Voroshilov cries out: "I say this boldly because I feel [*sic*!] the ground firmly under my feet" (*At the Glorious Post*, p. 169). In all this, rest assured, Voroshilov is again hopelessly confusing things and boasting as usual. He "failed to see" the passages in Kautsky's book that deal with usury as such (*Agrarfrage*, *S*. 11, 102-04, especially 118, 290-92), and with all his might forces an open door, shouting as usual about Kautsky's "doctrinaire formalism", "moral hard-heartedness", "mockery at human sufferings", and so forth. In regard to the peasant fulfilling the functions of entrepreneur, apparently this astonishingly complicated idea is beyond the scope of Voroshilov's comprehension. In the next essay, however, we shall try to clarify this for him with very concrete examples.

When Voroshilov seeks to prove that he is a real representative of the "interests of labour" and abuses Kautsky for "driving from the ranks of the proletariat numerous genuine working people" (op. cit., p. 167), such as the *Lumpenproletariat*, domestic servants, handicraftsmen, etc., then the reader can be assured that Voroshilov is again muddling things together. Kautsky examines the distinguishing characteristics of the "modern proletariat" which created the modern "Social-Democratic proletarian movement" (*Agrarfrage*, *S*. 306); but to date the Voroshilovs have produced nothing to show that tramps, handicraftsmen, and domestic servants have created a Social-Democratic movement. The charge directed at Kautsky that he is capable of "driving" domestic servants (who in Germany are now beginning to join the movement), handicraftsmen, etc., from the ranks of the proletariat merely exposes to the full the impudence of the Voroshilovs; their display of friendship for the "genuine working people" increases as such phrases decrease in prac-

tical significance, and they can attack with greater impunity the *second part* of the *Agrarian Question*, which has been suppressed by the Russian censor. Speaking, incidentally, of impudence, there are some other gems. In praising Messrs. N.—on[75] and Kablukov, while completely ignoring the Marxist criticism directed against them, Mr. Chernov, with affected naïveté, asks: To whom do the German Social-Democrats refer when they speak of their Russian "comrades"? Let him who finds it hard to believe that such questions are asked in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, turn to No. 7, p. 166.

When Voroshilov asserts that Engels' "prediction" that the Belgian labour movement will prove barren owing to the influence of Proudhonism[76] "has been proved false", then the reader may well know that Voroshilov, self-assured in his, shall we say, "irresponsibility", is again distorting the facts. He writes: "It is not surprising that Belgium has never been orthodox Marxist, and it is not surprising that Engels, being displeased with her for that reason, predicted that the Belgian movement, owing to the influence of 'Proudhonist principles', would pass '*von nichts durch nichts zu nichts*'.* Alas, this prediction has fallen through, and the breadth and many-sidedness of the Belgian movement enable it to serve today as a model from which many 'orthodox' countries are learning a great deal" (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 10, p. 234). The facts are as follows: In 1872 (seventy-two!), Engels was engaged in a polemic in the columns of the Social-Democratic paper *Volksstaat*[77] with the German Proudhonist Mülberger to deflate the exaggerated importance attached to Proudhonism, he wrote: "The only country where the working-class movement is directly under the influence of Proudhonist 'principles' is Belgium, and precisely as a result of this the Belgian movement comes, as Hegel would say, 'from nothing through nothing to nothing'."**

Thus, it is *positively untrue* to say that Engels "predicted" or "prophesied" anything. He merely spoke of *the facts as they were*, i.e., the situation that existed in 1872. And it is an

* "From nothing through nothing to nothing."—*Ed.*

** See the pamphlet *Zur Wohnungsfrage*, Zürich, 1887, in which Engels' articles against Mülberger, written in 1872, are reproduced together with his introduction dated January 10, 1887. The passage quoted will be found on p. 56.[78]

undoubted historical fact that *at that time* the Belgian movement was marking time precisely because of the predominance of Proudhonism, whose leaders were opposed to collectivism and repudiated independent proletarian political action. Only in 1879 was a "Belgian Socialist Party" formed; and only from that time onwards was the campaign for universal suffrage conducted, marking the victory of Marxism over Proudhonism (the recognition of the political struggle of the proletariat organised in an independent class party) and the beginning of the pronounced successes of the movement. In its present programme the "Belgian Labour Party" has adopted *all* the fundamental ideas of Marxism (apart from certain minor points). In 1887, in a preface to the second edition of his articles on the housing question, Engels laid special emphasis on the "gigantic progress the international working-class movement has made during the past fourteen years". This progress, he writes, is largely due to the elimination of Proudhonism, which predominated *at that time* and which *now* has been almost forgotten. "In Belgium," Engels observes, "the Flemings have ousted the Walloons from the leadership of the movement, deposed [*abgesetzt*] Proudhonism, and greatly raised the level of the movement" (preface, p. 4. of the same pamphlet).[79] *Russkoye Bogatstvo*'s description of the facts is a veritable paragon of fidelity!

When Voroshilov ... but enough! Of course, we cannot hope to keep up with this legally published magazine, which is able with impunity, month after month, to give vent to a flood of falsehood about "orthodox" Marxism.

V

"THE PROSPERITY OF ADVANCED, MODERN SMALL FARMS". THE BADEN EXAMPLE*

Details, details! cries Mr. Bulgakov in *Nachalo* (No. 1, pp. 7 and 13); and this slogan is repeated a hundred times in a hundred different sharps and flats by all the "Critics".

* Chapters V-IX were published in the magazine *Obrazovaniye* with the following note by the author: "These essays were written in 1901. The first part was published in pamphlet form last year in Odessa [by Burevestnik (Storm Petrel) Publishers]. The second

Very well, gentlemen, let us examine the details.

It was utterly absurd of you to direct this slogan at Kautsky, since the principal task of a scientific study of the agrarian question, which is encumbered with a countless number of disconnected details, was to present a general picture of the whole of the modern agrarian system in its development. Your slogan merely concealed your lack of scientific principle and your opportunistic dread of any integral and well thought-out philosophy. Had you not read Kautsky's book in the manner of a Voroshilov, you would have been able to derive from it a great deal of information on handling and assimilating detailed statistics. And that you are unable to operate with detailed statistics we shall now demonstrate by a number of examples *chosen by yourselves*.

In his article entitled "Peasant Barbarians", directed against Kautsky and published in the magazine of the Voroshilovs, *Sozialistische* (??) *Monatshefte* (III. Jahrg., 1899, Heft 2), Eduard David triumphantly refers to "one of *the most thorough and interesting monographs*" on peasant farming that have appeared recently, namely, that of Moritz Hecht, entitled *Drei Dörfer der badischen Hard** (Leipzig, 1895). Hertz clutched at this reference and, following David, cited some figures from this "excellent work" (*S.* 68, Russian translation, p. 164) and "strongly recommended" (*S.* 79, Russian translation, p. 188) the reading of the original or of the passage given by David. Mr. Chernov, in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, hastened to repeat both David and Hertz, and contrasted to Kautsky's statements Hecht's "striking pictures of the prosperity of advanced, modern small farms" (No. 8, pp. 206-09).

Let us then turn to Hecht.

Hecht describes three Baden villages located at distances ranging from four to fourteen kilometres from Karlsruhe: Hagsfeld, Blankenloch, and Friedrichsthal. Although the farms are small, from one to three hectares, the peasants lead a prosperous and cultured life and gather an exceptionally large yield from their land. David (followed by Chernov)

---

part appears in print for the first time. Each essay is a more or less independent whole. Their common theme is the analysis of the criticism of Marxism in Russian literature."—*Ed.*

* *Three Villages in the Hard of Baden.—Ed.*

compares this yield with the average yield for the whole of Germany (in double centners per hectare: potatoes, 150-160 and 87.8; rye and wheat, 20-23 and 10-13; hay, 50-60 and 28.6) and exclaims: What do you think of that as an example of "backward small peasants"! In the first place, we reply, insofar as no comparison is made between small-and large-scale farming conducted under the same conditions, it is absurd to view this as an argument against Kautsky. Mr. Chernov appears even more absurd when he asserts, in *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 8, p. 229, that "Kautsky's rudimentary view [regarding the agronomic exploitation of the village by the town] even exaggerates the shady aspects of capitalism", and when he cites, on page 209 of the same issue, as an argument *against* Kautsky, an instance in which this capitalist obstacle to the progress of agriculture *is eliminated* by the fact that the villages he selects are situated in proximity to towns. While the overwhelming majority of the agricultural population lose an enormous quantity of natural fertilisers as a result of the depopulation of the rural districts by capitalism and the concentration of the population in the cities, an insignificant minority of suburban peasants obtain special benefits from their situation and become rich at the expense of the impoverishment of the masses. It is not surprising that the yield in the villages described is so high, considering that they spend the sum of 41,000 marks annually on manure from the army stables in the three neighbouring garrison towns (Karlsruhe, Bruchsal, and Durlach) and on liquid refuse from the urban drainage systems (Hecht, *S.* 65); artificial fertilisers are purchased only to the amount of 7,000 marks annually.* To attempt to refute the technical superiority of large-scale over small-scale farming by adducing instances of small farms

* Incidentally, Mr. Chernov assures the readers of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* that there is "hardly any noticeable difference" *in the size of the farms* in those villages. But if the demand for details is not an empty phrase on his lips, he cannot forget that for these suburban peasants the amount of land is of much less importance than the amount of fertilisers used; and in this respect the difference is extremely marked. The yields are highest and the peasants most prosperous in the village of Friedrichsthal, although the land area in that village is the smallest. This village, farming 258 hectares of land, spends 28,000 out of the total of 48,000

operating under such conditions means merely to expose one's impotence. Secondly, to what extent do these instances really represent "genuine small peasants", *echte und rechte Kleinbauern*, as David says, and as Hertz and Chernov repeat after him? They mention only the area of the farms, and in this way prove *only* their inability to handle detailed statistics. As everyone knows, a hectare of land is to a suburban peasant what ten hectares are to a peasant living in a remote district; moreover, the very *type* of farms undergoes radical change because of the proximity of towns. Thus, the price of land in Friedrichsthal, the village which has the least land, but which is the most prosperous of the suburban villages, ranges from 9,000 to 10,000 marks, *five times* the average price of land in Baden (1,938 marks), *and about twenty times* the price in remote districts in East Prussia. Consequently, judged by the size of output (the only exact index of the size of a farm), these are by no means "small" peasants. In regard to the *type* of farming, we see here a remarkably high stage of development of *money* economy and the *specialisation* of agriculture, which is particularly emphasised by Hecht. They cultivate tobacco (45 per cent of the area under cultivation in Friedrichsthal) and high grades of potatoes (used partly for seed and partly for the table of the "gentry"—Hecht, S. 17—in Karlsruhe); they sell milk, butter, sucking-pigs, and grown pigs to the capital, and themselves buy grain and hay. Agriculture here has assumed a completely commercial character, and the peasant who conducts his farm in the neighbourhood of the capital is the purest type of *petty-bourgeois*; so that, had Mr. Chernov really familiarised himself with the details he borrows from others, he might have acquired some understanding of this category of "petty-bourgeois" peasant which is to him so mysterious (see *Russkoye Bogatstvo*, No. 7, p. 163). It is most curious that both Hertz and Mr. Chernov, while declaring that they are totally unable to understand how the peasant fulfils the functions of an entrepreneur, how he is able to figure as a

---

marks spent on fertilisers, which amounts to 108 marks per hectare. Hagsfeld spends only 30 marks per hectare (12,000 marks for 397 hectares), while Blankenloch spends only 11 marks per hectare (8,000 marks for 736 hectares).

worker at one moment and as an entrepreneur at another, refer to the detailed investigation of an author who says bluntly: "The peasant of the eighteenth century, with his eight-to-ten hectares of land, was a peasant ["*was* a peasant", Mr. Chernov!] and a manual labourer; the dwarf peasant of the nineteenth century, with his one or two hectares of land, is a brainworker, an entrepreneur and a merchant" (Hecht, *S.* 69; cf. *S.* 12: "The farmer has become a *merchant* and an *entrepreneur*." Hecht's italics). Well, have not Hertz and Mr. Chernov "annihilated" Kautsky in the Voroshilov manner for confusing the peasant with the entrepreneur?

The clearest indication of the "entrepreneur" is his employment of wage-labour. It is highly characteristic that not one of the quasi-socialists who referred to Hecht's work *uttered a single word* about that fact. Hecht, a most typical *Kleinbürger* of the ultra-loyal type, who waxes enthusiastic over the piety of the peasants and the "paternal solicitude" shown them by the Grand Duchy officials in general, and over their adoption of such an "important" measure as, in particular, the establishment of cookery schools, naturally tries to obscure those facts and to show that no "social gulf" separates the rich from the poor, the peasant from the agricultural labourer, or the peasant from the factory worker. "No agricultural *day-labourer* category exists," writes Hecht. "The majority of the peasants are able to cultivate their land themselves, with the help of their families; only a few in those three villages experience the need for outside help during the harvest or at threshing time; such families 'request' ['*bitten*'], to employ the local expression, certain men or women, who would never dream of calling themselves 'day-labourers', 'to help them'" (*S.* 31). There is nothing surprising in the fact that only a few farmers in the three villages mentioned hire day-labourers, because many "farmers", as we shall see, are factory workers. What proportion of pure farmers employ hired labour Hecht does not say; he prefers to pack his candidate's thesis (the Germans call it doctoral dissertation), which is devoted only to three villages (of one of which he is a native), not with exact statistics concerning the various categories of peasants, but with reflections on the high moral significance of diligence and thrift. (Notwithstanding this, or perhaps because of it, Hertz and David extol Hecht's

work to the skies.) All we learn is that the wages of day-labourers are lowest in the most prosperous and purely agricultural village, Friedrichsthal, which is farthest away from Karlsruhe (14 kilometres). In Friedrichsthal, a day-labourer gets two marks a day, paying for his own keep, while in Hagsfeld (4 kilometres from Karlsruhe and inhabited by factory workers) the wages of a day-labourer are three marks a day. Such is one of the conditions of the "prosperity" of the "real small peasants" so much admired by the Critics. "In those three villages," Hecht informs us, "purely patriarchal relations still exist between the masters and their *servants* [*Gesinde* in German means both domestic servants and farm labourers]. The 'master', i.e., the peasant with three to four hectares of land, addresses his men and women labourers as 'thou' and calls them by their forenames; they call the peasant 'uncle' [*Vetter*] and the peasant's wife 'auntie' [*Base*], and address them as 'you'.... The labourers eat at the family table and are regarded as members of the family" (*S.* 93). Our "most thorough" Hecht says nothing about the extent to which hired labour is employed in tobacco growing, which is so widely developed in that district and which requires a particularly large number of labourers; but since he has said at least something about wage-labour, even this very loyal little bourgeois must be regarded as being much better able to handle the "details" of a research than the Voroshilovs of "critical" socialism.

Thirdly, Hecht's research was used to refute the fact that the peasantry suffers from overwork and undernourishment. But here it turns out that the Critics preferred *to ignore* facts of the kind *mentioned* by Hecht. They cleverly utilised that conception of the "middle" peasant by means of which both the Russian Narodniks and the West-European bourgeois economists so extensively idealise the "peasantry". Speaking "generally", the peasants in the three villages mentioned are very prosperous; but even from Hecht's far from thorough monograph it is apparent that in this respect the peasants must be divided into three large groups. About one-fourth (or 30 per cent) of the farmers (the majority in Friedrichsthal and a few in Blankenloch) are prosperous petty bourgeois, who have grown rich as a result of living in the vicinity of the capital. They engage in remunerative dairy farming (selling

10-20 litres of milk a day) and tobacco growing (one example: gross income of 1,825 marks from 1.05 hectares of land under tobacco), fatten pigs for sale (in Friedrichsthal, 497 out of 1,140 inhabitants keep pigs; in Blankenloch, 445 out of 1,684; and in Hagsfeld, 220 out of 1,273 inhabitants), etc. This minority (who alone possess all the features of "prosperity" so much admired by the Critics) are without doubt quite frequent employers of hired labour. In the next group, to which the majority of farmers in Blankenloch belong, standards are very much lower, less fertilisers is used, the yield is lower, there is less livestock (in Friedrichsthal, the number of livestock, expressed in terms of cattle, is 599 head on 258 hectares; in Blankenloch, 842 head on 736 hectares; and in Hagsfeld, 324 head on 397 hectares); "parlours" are more rarely seen in the houses, meat is far from being a daily fare, and many families practise (what is so familiar to us Russians) the selling of grain in the autumn—when they are hard pressed for money—and the re-purchasing of grain in the spring.* In this group, the centre of gravity is constantly shifting *from agriculture to industry*, and 103 Blankenloch peasants are already employed as factory workers in Karlsruhe. These, together with almost the entire population of Hagsfeld, form the third category (40-50 per cent of the total number of farms). In this category, agriculture is a side line in which mostly women are engaged. The standard of living is higher than in Blankenloch (the result of the influence of the capital city), but poverty is strongly felt. The peasants sell their milk and for themselves sometimes purchase "cheaper margarine" (*S.* 24). The number of goats kept is rapidly increasing: from nine in 1855 to ninety-three in 1893. "This increase," writes Hecht, "can be explained only by the disappearance of farms that are strictly speaking peasant farms, and the break-up [*Auflösung*] of the peasant

* Incidentally, Hecht explains the economic backwardness of Blankenloch by the predominance of natural economy and the *existence of common lands* which guarantees to every person on reaching the age of 32 a strip of land (*Allmendgut*) of 36 *ares* (1 *are* = 0.01 hectare.—*Ed.*), irrespective of whether he is "lazy or diligent, thrifty or otherwise" (*S.* 30). Hecht, for all that, is opposed to dividing up the common lands. This, he says, is a sort of public charity institution (*Altersversorgung*) for aged factory workers, whose numbers are increasing in Blankenloch.

class into a class of rural factory workers possessing extremely small plots of land" (*S*. 27). Parenthetically, it should be said that between 1882 and 1895 the number of goats in Germany increased enormously: from 2,400,000 to 3,100,000, which clearly reveals the reverse of the progress of the "sturdy peasantry" which the Bulgakovs and the petty-bourgeois socialist "Critics" laud to the skies. The majority of the workers walk three and a half kilometres every day to their factory in the town, because they cannot afford to spend even one mark (48 kopeks) a week on railway fares. Nearly 150 workers out of the 300 in Hagsfeld find it beyond their means to pay even 40 or 50 pfennigs for dinner in the "public dining-room" and have their dinners brought to them from home. "Punctually at eleven o'clock," writes Hecht, "the poor womenfolk put the dinners in their pots and carry them to the factory" (*S*. 79). As for the working women, they, too, work at the factory ten hours a day, and all they receive for their toil is from 1.10 to 1.50 marks (the men receive 2.50 to 2.70 marks); at piece-work they earn from 1.70 to 2.00 marks. "Some of the working women try to supplement their meagre wages by some auxiliary employment. In Blankenloch four girls work at the paper mill in Karlsruhe, and they take home paper to make bags at night. Working from eight p. m. to eleven p. m. [*sic*!], they can make 300 bags, for which they receive 45-50 pfennigs; this supplement to their small daily earnings goes to pay their railway fares to and from work. In Hagsfeld, several women who worked in factories as girls earn a little extra money polishing silverware on winter evenings" (*S*. 36). "The Hagsfeld worker," says Hecht, moved, "has a permanent residence not by imperial order, but as a result of his own efforts; he has a little house which he is not compelled to share with others, and a small plot of land. But more important than these real possessions is the consciousness that they have been acquired by his own diligence. The Hagsfeld worker is both a factory worker and a peasant. Those with no land of their own rent at least a few strips to supplement their income by *working in their spare time*. In the summer, when work in the factory starts only ["only"!] at seven o'clock, the worker rises at four in order to hoe potatoes in his field, or to carry fodder to the cattle. Or when he returns from work at seven in the evening, what is

there for him to do, especially in the summer? Well, he puts in an hour or an hour and a half in his field; he does not want a high rent from his land—he merely wants to make full use [*sic*!] of his labour-power...." Hecht goes on at great length in this unctuous strain and concludes his book with the words: "The dwarf peasant and the factory worker have both [*sic*!] raised themselves to the position of the middle class, not as a result of artificial and coercive measures, but as a result of their own diligence, their own energy, and the higher morality they have reached."*

"The three villages of the Baden Hard now represent *one great and broad middle class*" (Hecht's italics).

There is nothing astonishing in the fact that Hecht writes in this vein, for he is a bourgeois apologist of the common or garden variety. But what name do those people deserve who, to deceive others, call themselves socialists, who paint reality in still brighter colours than does Hecht, point to the prosperity of the bourgeois minority as general progress, and conceal the proletarisation of the majority with the stale shibboleth "unification of agriculture and industry"?

VI

THE PRODUCTIVITY OF A SMALL AND A BIG FARM. AN EXAMPLE FROM EAST PRUSSIA

For a change let us go from distant South Germany to East Prussia, nearer to Russia. We have before us a highly instructive and *detailed* investigation of which Mr. Bulgakov, who clamours so loudly for details, has been totally unable to make use. "A comparison of the data on the real

* Hecht says very much more about this "higher morality", and no less than Mr. Bulgakov waxes enthusiastic over the "sober marital policy", the "iron diligence", the "thrift", and the "temperance" he even quotes a "well-known peasant proverb": *Man sieht nicht auf die Goschen* (*d. h. Mund*), *sondern auf die Groschen*, which freely translated means: We work, not so much for our mouths as for our pockets. We suggest that our readers compare this proverb with the "doctrine" of the Kiev professor, Bulgakov: that peasant farming (since it seeks neither lent nor profit) is "the most advantageous form of organisation of agriculture that society [*sic*!] can have" (Bulgakov, I, 154).

productivity of large and small farms," writes Mr. Bulgakov, "cannot provide an answer to the question of their technical advantages, since the farms compared may be operating under different economic conditions. The most that can be obtained from such data is the factual confirmation of the negative conclusion that large-scale production possesses no technical advantages over small-scale production, not only theoretically, but, under certain conditions, also practically. Quite a few comparisons of this kind have been made in economic literature, at all events sufficient to undermine the belief of the unbiased and unprejudiced reader in the advantages of large-scale production generally" (I, 57-58). In a footnote the author cites two instances. The first is Auhagen's work, quoted by Kautsky in his *Agrarfrage* (*S.* 111), as well as by Hertz (*S.* 69, Russian translation, p. 166), in which a comparison is made only between two farms in Hanover, one of 4.6 hectares and one of 26.5 hectares. In this example, the small farm has a higher yield per hectare than the large one, and Auhagen determined the income of the small farm to be higher than that of the large farm. Kautsky, however, has shown that this higher income is the result of *under-consumption*. Hertz attempted to refute this evidence, but with his usual success. Since Hertz' work has now been translated into Russian, while Kautsky's reply to Hertz is unknown in Russia, we shall, very briefly, give the substance of this reply (in the cited article in *Neue Zeit*). Hertz, as usual, distorted Kautsky's arguments and alleged that he referred only to the fact that the owner of the big farm is able to send his son to the Gymnasium. In actuality, Kautsky mentioned this merely to illustrate the standard of living, and had Hertz quoted *in full the budgets* of the two families in question (each consisting of five persons), he would have obtained the following figures: 1,158.40 marks for the small farm and 2,739.25 marks for the large farm. If the family of the small farm lived on the *same* standard as that of the large farm, the small farm would prove *less* profitable than the large one. Auhagen estimates the income of the small farm at 1,806 marks, i.e., 5.45 per cent of the capital invested (33,651 marks), and that of the large farm at 2,720 marks, or 1.82 per cent of the capital invested (149,559 marks). If we make allowance for the under-consumption of the small

farmer, we shall find that his income is equal to *258 marks*, or *0.80 per cent*! And this, when the amount of labour involved is disproportionately high: on the small farm there are three workers to 4.6 hectares, that is, one worker to 1.5 hectares, while on the large farm there are eleven (see Hertz, *S.* 75, Russian translation, p. 179) to 26.5 hectares, that is one worker to 2.4 hectares. Furthermore, we shall not dwell on the circumstance, justly ridiculed by Kautsky, that the alleged socialist Hertz compares the labour of the children of modern peasants to Ruth's[80] gleaning! Mr. Bulgakov confines himself merely to presenting the figures of the yield per hectare, but *says not a word* about the respective standards of living of the small and big farmers.

"We find another example," continues our advocate of details, "in the latest researches of Karl Klawki (*Ueber Konkurrenzfähigkeit des landwirtschaftlichen Kleinbetriebs. Thiel's Landwirtschaftliche Jahrbücher*, 1899, Heft 3-4).* His examples are taken from East Prussia. The author compares large, medium, and small farms by taking four of each kind. The specific feature of his comparisons is, first, the fact that expenditure and income are expressed in money, and, secondly, the fact that the author translates the cost of labour-power on the small farms, where it is not purchased, into money and places it to the expenditure account; such a method is hardly correct for our purpose [*sic*! Mr. Bulgakov forgets to add that Klawki translates the cost of labour on *all* the farms into money and from the outset values the labour on the small farms at a lower rate!]. Nevertheless, we have...." There follows a table which for the moment we shall merely summarise: the average net profit per morgen (= ¼ hectare) on the large farm is ten marks, on the medium farm, eighteen marks, on the small farm, twelve marks. And Mr. Bulgakov concludes: "The highest profits are obtained on the medium farms; then come the small farms, while the large farms lag behind the others."

We have seen fit to quote the *entire* passage in which Mr. Bulgakov compares the large and small farms. Now let us consider what is evidenced by Klawki's interesting work,

---

* *The Competitive Capacity of Small-Scale Production in Agriculture—Thiel's Agricultural Yearbooks*, 1899, Issue 3-4.—*Ed.*

120 pages of which are devoted to a description of twelve typical farms existing under equal conditions. In the first place, we shall cite the statistics pertaining to these farms, and in the interest of space and clarity we shall confine ourselves to the *average* figures for the large, medium, and small farms (the average size of the farms in each category being 358, 50, and 5 hectares respectively).

Category of farms	Income and expenditure per morgen in marks (1 morgen = 1/4 hectare)												Expenditure per 100 marks of products*		Per 100 morgen	
	Total Income			Income from the sale of produce			Consumption of own produce			Total			Marks			
	Agriculture	Stock farming	Total	Agriculture	Stock farming	Total	Agriculture	Stock farming	Total	Income	Expenses	Net profit	a	b	Hired workdays	Total workdays
Large	17	16	33	11	14	25	6	2	8	33	23	10	65	70	887	887
Medium	18	27	45	12	17	29	6	10	16	45	27	18	35	60	744	924
Small	23	41	64	9	27	36	14	14	28	64	52	12	8	80	—	—

It would appear, therefore, that *all* Mr. Bulgakov's conclusions are fully confirmed by Klawki's work: the smaller the farm, the higher the gross income and the higher even the income from sales per morgen! We think that with the methods employed by Klawki—widely employed methods, in their main features common to all bourgeois and petty-bourgeois economists—the superiority of small-scale farming in all or nearly all cases is proved. Consequently, *the essential thing* in this matter, which the Voroshilovs completely fail to see, is *to analyse those methods*, and it is for this reason that Klawki's partial researches are of such enormous general interest.

Let us start with the yields. It turns out that the yield of the great majority of cereals regularly and very considerably

* a = where the value of the labour-power of the farmer and his family is not expressed in terms of money; b = if it is so expressed.

diminishes with the diminution of the area of the farms. The yield (in centners per morgen) on the large, medium, and small farms respectively is: wheat 8.7, 7.3, 6.4; rye 9.9, 8.7, 7.7; barley 9.4, 7.1, 6.5; oats 8.5, 8.7, 8.0; peas 8.0, 7.7, 9.2;* potatoes 63, 55, 42; mangels 190, 156, 117. Only of flax, not grown on the large farms, do the small farms (3 out of 4) gather a bigger yield than the medium farms (2 out of 4), namely, 6.2 *Stein* (=18.5 pounds) as against 5.5.

To what is the higher yield on the large farms due? Klawki ascribes decisive importance to the following four causes: (1) Drainage is almost entirely absent on the small farms, and even where it exists the drain pipes are laid by the farmer himself and laid badly. (2) The small farmers do not plough their land deep enough, their horses being weak. (3) Most often the small farmers are unable to give their cattle sufficient fodder. (4) The small farmers have inferior manure, their straw is shorter, it is largely used as fodder (which also means that the feed is inferior), and less straw is used for bedding.

Thus, the small farmers' cattle is weaker and inferior, and is kept in a worse condition. This circumstance explains the strange and glaring phenomenon that, notwithstanding the higher yield per morgen on the large farms, income from agriculture per morgen, according to Klawki's computations, is less on the large than on the medium and small farms. The reason for this is that Klawki *does not include fodder*, either in disbursement or in income. In this way, things that in reality make for an essential difference between the large and small farms, a difference unfavourable to the latter, are artificially and falsely equated. By this method of computation large-scale farming appears to be less remunerative than small-scale farming, *because* a larger portion of the land of the large farms is devoted to the cultivation of fodder (although the large farms keep a much smaller number of cattle per unit of land), whereas the small farmers "make shift" with straw for fodder. Consequently, the "superiority" of small-scale farming lies in its *wasteful exploitation* of the land (by inferior fertilisation) and of the *cattle* (by inferior fodder).

* These are grown only on two out of the four farms in this category; in the large and medium categories, three out of four grow peas.

Needless to say, such a comparison of the profitableness of different farms lacks all scientific value.*

Another reason for the higher yield on large farms is that a larger number of the big farmers (and apparently, even, almost they alone) marl the soil, utilise larger quantities of artificial fertilisers (the expenditure per morgen being 0.81 marks, 0.38 marks, and 0.43 marks respectively) and *Kraftfuttermittel*** (in large farms two marks per morgen, and in the others nil). "Our peasant farms," says Klawki, who includes the medium farms in the category of large peasant farms, "spend nothing on *Kraftfuttermittel*. They are very slow to adopt progressive methods and are particularly chary of spending cash" (Klawki, op. cit., 461). The large farms are superior also in the method of cultivating the soil: we observe improved crop rotation on all four of the large farms, on three of the medium farms (on one the old three-field system is used), and only on one of the small farms (on the other three the three-field system is used). Finally, the big farmers use machinery to a far greater extent. True, Klawki himself is of the opinion that machinery is of no great consequence, but we shall not be satisfied with that "opinion"; we shall examine the statistics. The following eight kinds of machines—steam threshers, horse threshers, grain-sorting machines, sifters, seed-drills, manure spreaders, horse-drawn rakes, and rollers—are distributed among the farms described, as follows: on the four large farms, twenty-nine (including one steam thresher); on the four medium farms, eleven (not a single steam-driven machine); and on the four small farms, one machine (a horse-driven thresher).

---

* It should be noted that a similarly false equation of obviously unequal quantities in small- and large-scale farming is to be found, not only in separate monographs but in the great bulk of contemporary agrarian statistics. Both French and German statistics deal with "average" live weight and "average" price per head of cattle in all categories of farms. German statistics go so far in this method as to define the gross value of the whole of the cattle in various categories of farms (classified according to area). At the same time, however the reservation is made that the presumed equal value per head of cattle in different categories of farms "does not correspond to the reality" (*S.* 35).

** Concentrated feed.—*Ed.*

Of course, no "opinion" of any admirer of peasant farming can make us believe that grain-sorting machines, seed-drills, rollers, etc., do not affect the size of the crop. Incidentally, we have here data on machines belonging to certain definite owners, unlike the general run of German statistics, which register only cases of the use of machines, whether owned or hired. Obviously, such a registration will also have the effect of minimising the superiority of large-scale farming and of obscuring forms of "borrowing" machines, like the following described by Klawki: "The big farmer willingly lends the small farmer his roller, horse rake, and grain-sorting machine, if the latter promises to supply a man to do the mowing for him in the busy season" (443). Consequently, a certain number of the cases in which machines are employed on small farms, which, as we have shown, are rare, represent a transmuted form of acquiring labour-power.

To continue. Another case of erroneous comparison of obviously unequal quantities is Klawki's method of computing the price of the product on the market as being equal for all categories of farms. Instead of taking actual transactions, the author takes as a basis an assumption that he himself points to as incorrect. The peasants sell most of their grain in their own locality, and merchants in small towns force down prices very considerably. "The large estates are better off in this respect, for they can send grain to the principal city in the province in considerable quantities. In doing so, they usually receive from 20 to 30 pfennigs more per centner than they could get in the small town" (373). The big farmers are better able to assess the value of their grain (451), and they sell it, not by measure, as the peasants do to their disadvantage, but by weight. Similarly, the big farmers sell their cattle by weight, whereas the price of the peasants' cattle is fixed simply on the basis of outer appearance. The big farmers can also make better arrangements for selling their dairy products, for they can send their milk to the towns and obtain a higher price than the middle farmers, who convert their milk into butter and sell it to merchants. Moreover, the butter produced on the medium farms is superior to that produced on the small farms (use of separators, daily churning, and so forth), and the latter get from five to ten pfennigs per pound less. The small farmers have to

sell their fat stock sooner (i.e., less matured) than the middle farmers, because they have a smaller supply of fodder (444). Klawki, in his monograph, leaves out of his calculations all these advantages—in their totality by no means unimportant—which the large farms possess as sellers, just as the theoreticians who admire small-scale farming leave out this *fact* and refer to the *possibility* of improving matters by means of co-operation. We do not wish to confound the realities of capitalism with the possibilities of a petty-bourgeois co-operative paradise. Below we shall bring forward *facts* showing who really derives the most advantage out of co-operatives.

Let us note that Klawki "is not concerned with" the labour of the small and middle farmers themselves in draining the soil and in all kinds of repair work ("the peasants do the work themselves"), and so forth. The socialist calls this "advantage" enjoyed by the small farmer *Ueberarbeit*, overwork, and the bourgeois economist refers to it as one of the advantageous aspects ("for *society*"!) of peasant farming. Let us note that, as Klawki points out, the hired labourers get better pay and food on the medium farms than on the large farms, but they work harder: the "example" set by the farmer stimulates "greater diligence and thoroughness" (465). Which of these two capitalist masters—the landlord or his "own kind", the peasant—squeezes more work out of the labourer for the given wages, Klawki does not attempt to determine. We shall therefore confine ourselves to stating that the expenditure of the big farmers on accident and old-age insurance for their labourers amounts to 0.29 marks per morgen and that of the middle farmer to 0.13 marks (the small farmer here, too, enjoys an advantage in that he does not insure himself at all; needless to say, to the "great advantage of the society" of capitalists and landlords). We shall also bring an example from Russian agricultural capitalism. The reader who is familiar with Shakhovskoi's work *Outside Agricultural Employment* will probably remember the following characteristic observation: The Russian homestead farmers and the German colonists (in the south) "pick" their labourers, pay them from 15 to 20 per cent more than do the big employers and squeeze 50 per cent more work out of them. This was reported by Shakhovskoi in 1896; this year we read

in *Torgovo-Promyshlennaya Gazeta*,* for instance, the following communication from Kakhovka: "... The peasants and homestead farmers, as is the custom, paid higher wages (than those paid on the big estates), for they demand better workers and those possessing the greatest endurance" (No. 109, May 16, 1901). There are hardly grounds for assuming that this condition is characteristic of Russia alone.

In the table given above the reader saw two methods of computation—one that takes into account the money value of the farmer's labour-power, and one that does not. Mr. Bulgakov considers that to include this money value "is hardly correct". Of course, a precise budget of the farmers' and labourers' expenditure, in money and in kind, would be far more correct; but since we lack these data, we are obliged to make an *approximate* estimate of the family's money expenditure. The *manner* in which Klawki makes this approximation is extremely interesting. The big estate-owners do not work themselves, of course; they even have special salaried managers who carry out all the work of direction and supervision (of four estates, three are supervised by managers and one is not; Klawki would consider it more correct to classify this last estate, consisting of 125 hectares, as a large peasant estate). Klawki "assigns" to the owners of two large estates 2,000 marks per annum each "for their labour" (which on the first estate, for instance, consists of leaving the principal estate once a month for a few days' check-up on the manager's work). To the account of the farmer of 125 hectares (the first-mentioned estate consisted of 513 hectares) he "assigns" only 1,900 marks for the work of the farmer himself and of his three sons. Is it not "natural" that a farmer with a smaller amount of land should "make shift" with a smaller budget? Klawki allows the middle farmers from 1,200 to 1,716 marks for the labour of the husband and wife, and in three cases also of the children. To the small farmers he allows from 800 to 1,000 marks for the work of four to five (*sic*!) persons, i.e., a little more (if more at all) than a labourer, an *Instmann*, gets, who with his family earns only from 800 to 900 marks. Thus, we observe here another big step forward: first, a comparison is made between figures that are obvi-

* *Commercial and Industrial Gazette.—Tr.*

ously uncomparable; now it is declared that the standard of living *must* decline with the diminution in the size of the farm. But that means the *a priori* recognition of the fact that capitalism degrades the small peasants, a fact ostensibly to have been refuted by the computations of the "net profit"!

And if, by the author's *assumption*, the money income diminishes with the diminution in the size of the farm, the drop in consumption is evident by direct data. Consumption of agricultural products on the farms amounts to the following per person (counting two children as one adult): large farm, 227 marks (average of two figures); medium farm, 218 marks (average of four figures); small farm, 135 (*sic*!) marks (average of four figures). And the larger the farm, the larger is the quantity of additional food products purchased (*S.* 453). Klawki himself observes that here it is necessary to raise the question of *Unterkonsumption* (under-consumption), which Mr. Bulgakov denied, and which here he preferred *to ignore*, thus proving to be even more of an apologist than Klawki. Klawki seeks to minimise the significance of this fact. "Whether there is any under-consumption among the small farmers or not, we cannot say," he states, "but we think it is probable in the case of small farm IV [97 marks per head]. The fact is that the small peasants live very frugally [!] and sell much of what they, so to speak, save out of their mouths" (*sich sozusagen vom Munde absparen*).* He attempts to prove that this fact does not refute the higher "productivity" of small-scale farming. If consumption were increased to 170 marks, which is quite adequate (for the "younger broth-

* It is interesting to note, for example, that the income from the sale of milk and butter on the large farms amounts to seven marks per morgen, on the medium farms three marks, and *on the small farms* seven marks. The point is, however, that the small peasants consume "very little butter and whole milk ... while the inhabitants of small farm IV [on which the consumption of products produced on the farm amounts to only 97 marks per head] do not consume these items at all" (450). Let the reader compare this fact (which, by the way, has long been known to all except the "Critics") with Hertz' grand reasoning (*S.* 113, Russian translation, p. 270): "But does the peasant get nothing for his milk?" Who, in the end, eats the [milk-fed] pig? Not the peasant?" These utterances should be recalled more often as an unexcelled example of the most vulgar embellishment of poverty.

er",[81] but not for the capitalist farmer, as we see), the figure for consumption per morgen would have to be increased and the income from sales reduced by six or seven marks. If this amount is subtracted (see table above), we get from 29 to 30 marks, i.e., a sum still larger than that obtained on the large farms (*S.* 453). But if we increase consumption, not to this haphazardly-taken figure (and a low one at that, because "he'll manage somehow"), but to 218 marks (equal to the actual figure on the medium farms), the income from the sale of products will drop on the small farms to *20 marks* per morgen, as against 29 marks on the medium farms, and 25 marks on the large farms. That is to say, the correction of *this one* error (of the numerous errors indicated above) in Klawki's computations destroys *all* the "advantages" of the small peasant.

But Klawki is untiring in his quest of advantages. The small peasants "combine agriculture with industrial occupations": three small peasants (out of four) "diligently work as day-labourers and receive board in addition to their pay" (435). But the advantages of small-scale farming are particularly marked during periods of crisis (as Russian readers have long known from the numerous exercises on this theme on the part of the Narodniks, now rehashed by the Chernovs): "During agricultural crises, as well as at other times, it is the small farms that possess the greatest stability, they are able to sell a relatively larger quantity of products than the other categories of farms by severely curtailing domestic expenses, which, it is true, must lead to a certain amount of under-consumption" (479—Klawki's last conclusions; cf. *S.* 464). "Unfortunately, many small farms are reduced to this by the high rates of interest on loans. But in this way, although with great effort, they are able to keep on their feet and eke out a livelihood. Probably, it is the great diminution in consumption that chiefly explains the increase in the number of small peasant farms in our locality indicated in the statistics of the Empire." And Klawki adduces figures for the Königsberg *Regierungsbezirk*,* where in the period between 1882 and 1895 the number of farms under two hectares increased

* Königsberg Administrative Area.—*Ed.*

from 56,000 to 79,000, those from two to five hectares from 12,000 to 14,000, and those from five to twenty hectares from 16,000 to 19,000. This is in East Prussia, the very place in which the Bulgakovs claim to see the "elimination" of large-scale by small-scale production. And yet the gentlemen who give the bare statistics of the area of farms in this Suzdal[82] fashion clamour for "details"! Naturally, Klawki considers that "the most important task of modern agrarian policy for the solution of the agricultural labourer problem in the East is to encourage the most efficient labourers to settle down by affording them the opportunity of acquiring a piece of land as their own property, if not in the first, then at least in the second [*sic*!] generation" (476). It doesn't matter that the *Instleute* who purchase a plot of land out of their savings "in the majority of cases prove to be worse off financially; they are fully aware of this themselves, but they are tempted by the greater freedom", and the main task of bourgeois political economy (now, apparently, of the "Critics" also) is to foster this illusion among the most backward section of the proletariat.

Thus, on every point Klawki's inquiry refutes Mr. Bulgakov, who referred to Klawki. This inquiry demonstrates the technical superiority of large-scale production in agriculture, the overwork and under-consumption of the small peasant and his transformation into a regular or day-labourer for the landlord; it proves that there is a connection between the increase in the number of small peasant farms and the growth of poverty and proletarisation. Two conclusions that follow from this inquiry are of exceptional significance from the point of view of principle. First, we see clearly the obstacle to the introduction of machinery in agriculture: the abysmal degradation of the small farmer, who is ready to "leave out of account" his own toil and who makes manual labour cheaper for the capitalist than machinery. Mr. Bulgakov's assertions notwithstanding, the facts prove incontestably that under the capitalist system the position of the small peasant in agriculture is *in every way analogous* to that of the handicraftsman in industry. Mr. Bulgakov's assertions notwithstanding, we see in agriculture a still further diminution in consumption and a still further intensification of labour employed as methods of competing with large-scale

production. Secondly, in regard to every manner of comparison between the remunerativeness of small and large farms, we must once and for all declare as absolutely useless and vulgarly apologetic any conclusion that leaves out of account the following three circumstances: (1) How does the *farmer* eat, live, and work? (2) How are the *cattle* kept and worked? (3) How is the *land* fertilised, and is it exploited in a rational manner? Small-scale farming manages to exist by methods of sheer waste—waste of the farmer's labour and vital energy, waste of strength and quality of the cattle, and waste of the productive capacities of the land. Consequently, any inquiry that fails to examine these circumstances thoroughly is nothing more nor less than bourgeois sophistry.*

It is not surprising, therefore, that the "theory" of the overwork and under-consumption of the small peasants in modern society has been so severely attacked by Messrs. the Critics. In *Nachalo* (No. 1, p. 10) Mr. Bulgakov "undertook" to give any number of "citations" disproving Kautsky's asser-

* Leo Huschke, in his work, *Landwirtschaftliche Reinertrags-Berechnungen bei Klein-, Mittel- und Grossbetrieb dargelegt an typischen Beispielen Mittelthüringens* [*Assessment of Net Incomes of Small, Medium, and Large Farms, Based on Typical Examples from Middle Thuringia.—Ed.*] (Gustav Fischer, Jena, 1902), justly points out that "it is possible by merely reducing the assessment" of the small farmer's labour-power to obtain a computation that will prove his superiority over the middle and the big farmer, and his ability to compete with them (*S.* 126). Unfortunately, the author did not carry his idea to its logical conclusion, and therefore did not present systematic data showing the manner in which the cattle were kept, the method of fertilising the soil, and the cost of maintaining the farmer's household in the various categories of farms. We hope to return to Herr Huschke's interesting work. For the moment we shall merely note his reference to the fact that small-scale farming fetches lower prices for its products than large-scale farming (*S.* 146, 155) and his conclusion that: "The small and medium farms strove to overcome the crisis which set in after 1892 (the fall in the prices of agricultural produce) by cutting down cash expenditure as much as possible, while the large farms met the crisis through increasing their yields by means of increased expenditure on their farms" (*S.* 144). Expenditure on seeds fodder and fertilisers in the period from 1887-91 to 1893-97 was reduced on the small and medium farms and increased on the large farms. On the small farms this expenditure amounted to seventeen marks per hectare and on the large farms to forty-four marks. (Author's note to the 1908 edition.—*Ed.*)

tions. From the studies of the League for Social and Political Questions,[83] *Bäuerliche Zustände* (*Conditions of the Peasantry*), repeats Mr. Bulgakov, "Kautsky, in his attempt to galvanise the corpse [*sic*!] of the obsolete dogma back to life, selected certain facts showing the depressed condition of peasant farming, which is quite understandable at the present time. Let the reader look for himself; he will find evidence there of a somewhat different character" (II, 282). Let us "look" for ourselves and verify the quotations given by this strict scientist, who, in part, merely repeats Hertz' quotations (*S.* 77, Russian translation, p. 183).

"From Eisenach comes evidence of improvements in stock-breeding, in soil fertilisation, evidence of the use of machinery, and in general of progress in agricultural production...." We turn to the article on Eisenach (*Bäuerliche Zustände*, I. Band). The condition of the owners of less than five hectares (of which there are 887 out of the 1,116 farms in this district) "is, in general, not very favourable" (66). "Insofar as they can work for the big farmers as reapers, day-labourers, etc., their condition is relatively good..." (67). Generally speaking, important technological progress has been made in the past twenty years, but "much is left to be desired, particularly in regard to the smaller farms..." (72). "... the smaller farmers sometimes employ weak cows for field work...." Subsidiary earnings derive from tree felling and carting firewood; the latter "takes the farmers away from agriculture" and leads to "worsened conditions..." (69). "Nor does tree felling provide adequate earnings. In some districts the small landowners [*Grundstücksbesitzer*] engage in weaving, which is miserably [*leidlich*] paid. In isolated cases work is obtained at cigar-making at home. Generally speaking, there is a shortage of subsidiary earnings..." (73). And the author, Ökonomie-Commissar Dittenberger, concludes with the remark that, in view of their "simple lives" and their "modest requirements", the peasants are strong and healthy, which "is astonishing, considering the low nutritive value of the food consumed by the poorest class, among whom potatoes are the principal item of fare..." (74).

That is how the "learned" Voroshilovs refute the "obsolete Marxist prejudice that peasant farming is incapable of technological progress"!

"... In regard to the Kingdom of Saxony, General Secretary Langsdorff says that in whole districts, particularly in the more fertile localities, there is now hardly any difference in intensiveness of cultivation between the large and the small estates". That is how Kautsky is refuted by the Austrian Voroshilov (Hertz, *S.* 77, Russian translation, pp. 182-83), followed by the Russian Voroshilov (Bulgakov, II, 282, referring to *Bäuerliche Zustände*, II, 222). We turn to page 222 of the book from which the Critics cite, and following the words quoted by Hertz we read: "The difference is more marked in the hilly districts, where the bigger estates operate with a relatively large working capital. But here, too, very frequently, the peasant farms realise a no lesser net profit than do the large farms, since the smaller income is compensated by greater frugality, which at the prevailing very low level of requirements [*bei der vorhandenen grossen Bedürfnisslosigkeit*] is carried to such lengths that the condition of the peasant is very often worse than that of the industrial worker, who has become accustomed to greater requirements" (*Bäuerliche Zustände*, II, 222). We read further that the prevailing system of land cultivation is crop rotation, which has become the predominant system among the middle farmers, while "the three-field system is met with almost exclusively among the small peasant-owned estates". In regard to stock-breeding, progress is also observed everywhere. "Only in regard to the raising of horned cattle and the utilisation of dairy products does the peasant usually lag behind the big landlord" (223).

"Professor Ranke," continues Mr. Bulgakov, "testifies to the technological advance in peasant farming in the environs of Munich, which, he says, is typical for the whole of Upper Bavaria." We turn to Ranke's article: Three *Grossbauer* communities farming with the aid of hired labourers—69 peasants out of 119 hold more than 20 hectares each, comprising three-fourths of the land. Moreover, 38 of these "peasants" hold more than 40 hectares each, with an average of 59 hectares each; between them they hold nearly 60 per cent of the entire land....

We think this should suffice to reveal the manner in which Messrs. Bulgakov and Hertz "quote".

VII

THE INQUIRY INTO PEASANT FARMING IN BADEN

"Due to lack of space," writes Hertz, "we cannot render the detailed and interesting judgements of the Inquiry into 37 communities in Baden. In the majority of cases they are analogous to those presented above: side by side with favourable, we find unfavourable and indifferent judgements; *but nowhere in these entire three volumes of the Inquiry do the detailed budgets of expenditure give any grounds for the conclusion that 'under-consumption'* (*Unterkonsumption*), 'sordid and degrading poverty', etc., are prevalent" (*S.* 79, Russian translation, p. 188). The words we have emphasised represent, as usual, a *direct untruth*. The very Baden Inquiry to which Hertz refers contains documentary evidence *attesting* to "under-consumption" precisely among the *small peasantry*. Hertz' distortion of the facts closely resembles the method that was especially cultivated by the Russian Narodniks and is now practised by all the "Critics" on the agrarian question, viz., sweeping statements about "the peasantry". Since the term "peasantry" is still more vague in the West than it is in Russia (in the West this social-estate is not sharply defined), and since "average" facts and conclusions conceal the relative "prosperity" (or at all events, the absence of starvation) among the minority and the privation suffered by the majority, apologists of all sorts have an unlimited field of activity. In actual fact, the Baden Inquiry enables us to distinguish various groups of peasants, which Hertz, although an advocate of "details", preferred not to see. Out of 37 typical communities, a selection was made of typical farms of big peasants (*Grossbauer*), middle peasants, and small peasants, as well as of day-labourers, making a total of 70 peasants' (31 big, 21 middle, and 18 small) and 17 day-labourers' households; and the budgets of these households were subjected to a very detailed examination. We have not been able to analyse *all* the data; but the *principal results* cited below will suffice to enable us to draw very definite conclusions.

Let us first present the data on the general economic type of (a) large, (b) middle, and (c) small peasant farms (Anlage VI: "*Uebersichtliche Darstellung der Ergebnisse*

der in den Erhebungsgemeinden angestellten Ertragsberechnungen."* We have divided this table into groups for the *Grossbauer*, *Mittelbauer*, and *Kleinbauer* respectively). Size of holdings—average in each group: (a) 33.34 hectares, (b) 13.5 hectares, and (c) 6.96 hectares—which is relatively high for a country of small land-holdings like Baden. But if we exclude the ten farms in communities Nos. 20, 22, and 30, where exceptionally large holdings are the rule (up to 43 hectares among the *Kleinbauer* and up to 170 hectares among the *Grossbauer*!), we shall obtain the following figures, more normal for Baden: (a) 17.8 hectares, (b) 10.0 hectares, and (c) 4.25 hectares. Size of families: (a) 6.4 persons, (b) 5.8, and (c) 5.9. (Unless otherwise stated, these and subsequent figures apply to all the 70 farms.) Consequently, the families of the big peasants are considerably larger; nevertheless, they employ hired labour to a far greater extent than the others. Of the 70 peasants, 54, i.e., more than three-fourths of the total, employ hired labour, namely: 29 big peasants (out of 31), 15 middle (out of 21), and 10 small (out of 18). Thus, of the big peasants, 93 per cent cannot manage without hired labour, while the figure for the small peasants is 55 per cent. These figures are very useful as a test of the current opinion (accepted uncritically by the "Critics") that the employment of hired labour is negligible in present-day peasant farming. Among the big peasants (whose farms of 18 hectares are included in the category of 5-20 hectares, in wholesale descriptions reckoned as real peasant farms), we see pure capitalist farming: 24 farms employ 71 labourers—almost 3 labourers per farm, and 27 farmers employ day-labourers for a total of 4,347 days (161 man-days per farmer). Compare this with the size of the holdings of the big peasants in the environs of Munich, whose "progress" served our bold Mr. Bulgakov as a refutation of the "Marxist prejudice" regarding the degradation of the peasants by capitalism!

For the middle peasants we have the following figures: 8 employ 12 labourers, and 14 employ day-labourers for a total of 956 man-days. For the small peasants: 2 employ

* Appendix VI: "Brief Review of the Results of the Assessment of Incomes in Communities Investigated."—*Ed.*

2 labourers, and 9 employ day-labourers for a total of 543 man-days. One-half the number of *small* peasants employ hired labour for 2 months (543:9=60 days), i.e., in the most important season for the farmers (notwithstanding the fact that their farms are larger, the production of these small peasants is very much lower than that of the Friedrichsthal peasants, of whom Messrs. Chernov, David, and Hertz are so enamoured).

The results of this farming are as follows: 31 big peasants made a net profit of 21,329 marks and suffered a loss of 2,113 marks, i.e., a total profit for this category of 19,216 marks, or 619.9 marks per farm (523.5 marks if 5 farms in communities Nos. 20, 22, and 30 are excluded). For the medium farms the corresponding amount will be 243.3 marks (272.2 marks, if the 3 communities are excluded), and for the small farms, 35.3 marks (37.1 marks, if the 3 communities are excluded). Consequently, the small peasant, literally speaking, *can barely make ends meet and only just manages to do so by cutting down consumption*. The Inquiry (*Ergebnisse, etc.*, in Vol. IV of *Erhebungen*,[84] *S.* 138) contains figures showing the consumption of the most important food items on each farm. Below we quote these data as averages for each category of peasants:

Category of peasants	Consumption per person per day				Expenditure per person	
	Bread and fruit	Potatoes	Meat	Milk	Groceries, heating, lighting, etc., per day	Clothing per
	Pounds		Grammes	Litres	Pfennings	Marks
Big peasants	1.84	1.82	138	1.05	72	66
Middle "	1.59	1.90	111	0.95	62	47
Small "	1.49	1.94	72	1.11	57	38
Day-labourers	1.69	2.14	56	0.85	51	32

These are the data in which our bold Hertz "failed to perceive" either under-consumption or poverty! We see that the small peasant, as compared with those of the higher groups, reduces his consumption very considerably, and

that his food and clothing are little better than those of the day-labourer. For example, he consumes about two-thirds of the amount of meat consumed by the middle peasant, and about half the amount consumed by the big peasant. These figures prove once again the uselessness of sweeping conclusions and the erroneousness of all assessments of income that ignore differences in living standards. If, for instance, we take *only* the two last columns of our table (to avoid complicated calculations in translating food products into money terms), we shall see that the "net profit", not only of the small peasant, but also of the middle peasant, is a *pure fiction*, which only pure bourgeois like Hecht and Klawki, or pure Voroshilovs like our Critics, can take seriously. Indeed, if we assume that the small peasant spends as much money on food as the middle peasant does, his expenditure would be increased by *one hundred marks*, and we would get an enormous *deficit*. If the middle peasant spent as much as the big peasant, his expenditure would be increased by 220 marks, and unless he "stinted himself" in food he, too, would sustain a deficit.* Does not the reduced consumption of the small peasant, following self-evidently from the inferior feeding of his cattle and the inadequate restoration (often the complete exhaustion) of the productivity of the soil, entirely confirm the truth of Marx's words, at which the modern Critics merely shrug their shoulders in lofty contempt: "An infinite fragmentation

* Mr. Chernov "objects": Does not the big farmer stint his day-labourer still more in food and other expenses? (*Russkoye Bogatstvo*, 1900, No. 8, p. 212). This objection repeats the old Krivenko-Vorontsovtrick, if one may use such an expression, of *foisting* liberal-bourgeois arguments upon Marxists. The objection would be valid against those who say that large-scale production is superior, not only technically, but because it improves (or at least makes tolerable) the condition of the labourers. Marxists do not say that. They merely expose the false trick of *painting* the condition of the small farmer *in roseate hues*, either by sweeping statements about prosperity (Mr. Chernov on Hecht), or by estimates of "income" that *leave out of account* reduced consumption. The bourgeoisie must needs paint things in roseate hues, must needs foster the illusion among the labourers that they can become "masters" and that small "masters" can obtain high incomes. It is the business of socialists to expose these falsehoods and to explain to the small peasants that for them too there is no salvation outside of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat.

of means of production, and isolation of the producers themselves. Monstrous waste of human energy. Progressive deterioration of conditions of production and increased prices of means of production—an inevitable law of proprietorship of parcels" (*Das Kapital*, III, 2, *S.* 342).[85]

In regard to the Baden Inquiry we must note still another distortion by Mr. Bulgakov (the Critics mutually supplement each other; while one distorts one aspect of the information adduced from a given source, a second distorts the other). Mr. Bulgakov frequently quotes from the Baden Inquiry. It would *appear*, therefore, that he is acquainted with it. Yet we find him writing the following: "The exceptional and apparently fatal indebtedness of the peasant"—so states the Overture, II, 271—"represents one of the most immutable dogmas in the mythology created in literature in relation to peasant farming.... Surveys at our disposal reveal considerable indebtedness only among the smallest, not yet firmly established holdings [*Tagelöhnerstellen*]. Thus, Sprenger expresses the general impression obtained from the results of the extensive investigation conducted in Baden [to which reference is made in a footnote] in the following manner: '...Only the plots of the day-labourers and small peasant farmers are relatively speaking heavily mortgaged in a large number of the districts investigated; but even among these, in the majority of cases, the indebtedness is not so great as to cause alarm...'" (272). A strange thing. On the one hand, *there is reference to the Inquiry itself, and on the other*, there is merely the quoted "general impression" of a certain Sprenger who has written about this Inquiry. But as ill-luck would have it, Sprenger's writing falls short of the truth (at least in the passage quoted by Mr. Bulgakov; we have not read Sprenger's book). First, the authors of the Inquiry assert that, in the majority of cases, it is precisely the indebtedness of the small peasant holdings which *reaches* alarming dimensions. Secondly, they assert that the position of the small peasants in this respect is not only worse than that of the middle and big peasants (which Sprenger noted) *but also worse than that of the day-labourers*.

It must be observed in general that the authors of the Baden Inquiry established the extremely important fact that

on the large farms *the limits of permissible indebtedness* (i.e., the limits to which the farmer may go without risking bankruptcy) *are higher than on the small farms*. After the data we have presented above on the farming results obtained by the big, middle, and small peasants respectively, this fact requires no further explanation. The authors of the Inquiry estimate the indebtedness permissible and safe (*unbedenklich*) for the large and medium farms at 40-70 per cent of the land value, or an average of 55 per cent. In regard to the small farms (which they set as between four and seven hectares for crop cultivation, and between two and four hectares for viticulture and commercial crops), they consider that "the limits of indebtedness ... must not exceed 30 per cent of the value of the holding, if the *regular* payment of interest and of instalments on the principal is to be *fully* secured" (*S*. 66, B. IV). In the surveyed communities (with the exception of those where *Anerbenrecht** prevails, e.g., Unadingen and Neukirch), the percentage of indebtedness (in proportion to the value of the estate) steadily diminishes as we pass from the small to the large farms. In the community of Dittwar, for instance, the indebtedness of farms up to one-fourth of a hectare equals 180.65 per cent; from one to two hectares, 73.07 per cent; from two to five hectares, 45.73 per cent; from five to ten hectares, 25.34 per cent; and from ten to twenty hectares, 3.02 per cent (ibid., *S*. 89-90). But the percentage of indebtedness does not tell us everything, and the authors of the Inquiry draw the following conclusion:

"The above-given statistics, consequently, confirm the widespread opinion that those owners of peasant holdings who are on the border-line [in the middle] between the day-labourers and the middle peasants [in the rural districts the farmers of this category are usually called the "middle estate"—*Mittelstand*] are frequently in a worse position than those in the groups above or below [*sic*!] in the size of their holdings; for, although they are able to cope with *moderate* indebtedness, if it is kept at a certain and not very high level, they find it difficult to meet their obligations, being

* Right of inheritance, by which the property of a peasant household passes undivided to a single heir.—*Ed*.

unable to obtain *regular* collateral employment (as day-labourers, etc.), by which means to increase their income....” Day-labourers, “insofar as they have some regular collateral employment, are frequently in a much better position materially than those belonging to the ‘middle estate’, for, as computations in numerous cases have shown, collateral employment produces at times such a high net (i.e., money) income as to enable them to repay even *large* debts” (loc. cit., 67).* Finally, the authors reiterate that the indebtedness of the small peasant farms in relation to the permissible level is “sometimes unsafe”; hence, “in purchasing land, particular business-like caution must be exercised ... primarily by the *small* peasant population and by the day-labourers, closely related to it” (98).

This, then, is the bourgeois counsellor to the small peasant! On the one hand, he fosters in the proletarians and semi-proletarians the hope that they will be able to purchase land, “if not in the first, then in the second generation”, and by diligence and abstemiousness obtain from it an enormous percentage of “net income”; on the other hand, he advises especially the poor peasants to exercise “particular caution” in purchasing land if they have no “regular employment”, that is to say, when the capitalists have no need for settled workers. And yet there are “critical” simpletons who accept these selfish lies and threadbare banalities as the findings of the most up-to-date science!

One would think that the detailed data we have presented on the big, middle, and small peasants would suffice to make even Mr. V. Chernov understand the meaning of the term “petty bourgeois” as applied to the peasant, a term that seems to inspire him with such horror. Capitalist evolution has not only introduced similarity in the *general* economic system of West-European countries, but it has brought Russia also closer to the West, so that *the main features* of peasant farming in Germany are similar to those

* The authors of the Inquiry rightly say: The small peasant sells relatively little for cash, but he stands particularly in need of money, and because of his lack of capital, every cattle disease, every hailstorm, etc., hits him particularly hard.

in Russia. However, in Russia the process of differentiation among the peasantry, abundantly confirmed in Russian Marxist literature, is in an initial stage; it has not yet assumed anything like a finished form, it has not yet given rise, for example, to the immediately noticeable, distinctive type of big peasant (*Grossbauer*). In Russia the mass expropriation and extinction of an enormous section of the peasantry still greatly overshadow the "first steps" of our peasant bourgeoisie. In the West, however, this process, which started even before the abolition of serfdom (cf. Kautsky, *Agrarfrage*, *S*. 27), long ago caused the obliteration of the social-estate distinction between peasant and "privately-owned" (as we call it) farming, on the one hand, and the formation of a class of agricultural wage-workers, which has already acquired fairly definite features, on the other.* It would be a grave error to assume, however, that this process came to a stop after more or less definite new types of rural population had emerged. On the contrary, it goes on continuously, now rapidly, now slowly, of course, depending on the numerous and varying circumstances, and assumes most diverse forms according to the varying agronomic conditions, etc. The proletarisation of the peasantry continues, as we shall prove below by the mass of German statistics; besides which, it is evident from the cited data on the small peasantry. The increasing flight, not only of agricultural labourers, but of peasants, from the country to the towns is in itself striking evidence of this growing proletarisation. But the peasant's flight to the town is necessarily preceded by his ruin; and the ruin is preceded by a desperate struggle for economic independence. The data on the extent of the employment of hired labour, the amount of "net income", and the level of consumption of the various types of peasantry, bring out this struggle in striking relief. The principal weapon in this fight is "iron diligence" and frugality—frugality according to the motto "We work, not so much for our mouths as for our pockets". The inevitable result of the

* "The peasantry," writes Mr. Bulgakov, with reference to France in the nineteenth century, "split up into two sections, each sharply distinguished from the other, namely, the proletariat and the small proprietors" (II, 176). The author is mistaken, however, in believing that the "splitting up" ended with this—it is a ceaseless process.

struggle is the rise of a minority of wealthy, prosperous farmers (an insignificant minority in most cases—and in every case when particularly favourable conditions are absent, such as proximity to the capital, the construction of a railway, or the opening up of some new, remunerative branch of commercial agriculture, etc.) and the continuously increasing impoverishment of the majority, which steadily saps the strength of the peasants by chronic starvation and exhausting toil, and causes the quality of the land and cattle to deteriorate. The inevitable result of the struggle is the rise of a minority of *capitalist* farms based on wage-labour, and the increasing necessity for the majority to work at "side lines", i.e., their conversion into industrial and agricultural wage-workers. The data on wage-labour very clearly reveal the immanent tendency, inevitable under the present system of society, for all small producers to become small capitalists.

We quite understand why bourgeois economists, on the one hand, and opportunists of various shades, on the other, shun this aspect of the matter and why they cannot help doing so. The differentiation of the peasantry reveals to us the *profoundest* contradictions of capitalism in the very process of their *inception* and their further development. A complete evaluation of these contradictions inevitably leads to the recognition of the small peasantry's blind-alley and hopeless position (hopeless, outside the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against the entire capitalist system). It is not surprising that these most profound and most undeveloped contradictions are not mentioned; there is an attempt to evade the fact of the overwork and under-consumption of the small peasants, which can be denied only by unconscionable or ignorant people. The question of the hired labour employed by the peasant bourgeoisie and of wage-work of the rural poor is left in the shade. Thus, Mr. Bulgakov submitted an "essay on the theory of agrarian development", passing over both these questions in eloquent silence!*

* Or contains no less eloquent evasions, such as: "...the numerous cases of combining industry with agriculture, when industrial wage-workers own small plots of land..." are "no more than a detail [?!] in the economic system. There are as yet [?] no grounds for regarding this as a new manifestation of the industrialisation of agricul-

"Peasant farming," he says, "may be defined as that form of farming in which the labour of the peasant's own family is exclusively, or almost exclusively employed. Very rarely do even peasant farms dispense altogether with outside labour,—the help of neighbours or casual hired labour—but this does not change [naturally!] the economic features of peasant farming" (I, 141). Hertz is somewhat more naïve, and at the very beginning of his book he makes the following reservation: "Hereinafter, by small or peasant farms I shall always assume a form of farming in which the farmer, the members of his family, and not more than one or two workers are employed" (*S*. 6, Russian translation, p. 29). When they discuss the hiring of a "hand" our *Kleinbürger* soon forget the very "peculiarities" of agriculture which they constantly make so much of with no regard for relevance. In agriculture, one or two labourers is by no means a small number, even if they work only in the summer. But the main thing is not whether this is a small or a large number; the main thing is that hired labourers are employed by the

---

ture, or its loss of independent development; this phenomenon is much too insignificant in extent (in Germany, for instance, only 4.09 per cent of agricultural land is held by industrial wage-workers)" (*sic*!—II, pp. 254-55). In the first place, the fact that an insignificant *share* of the land is held by hundreds of thousands of workers does not prove that this "phenomenon is insignificant in extent", it proves rather that capitalism degrades and proletarises the small farmer. Thus, the total number of farmers holding less than two hectares (although their number is enormous: 3,200,000 out of 5,500,000, or 58.2 per cent, almost *three-fifths*) own "only" 5.6 per cent of the total area of agricultural land. Will our clever Mr. Bulgakov draw the inference from this that the entire "phenomenon" of small landownership and small farming is a mere "detail" and "is much too insignificant in extent"?? Of the 5,500,000 farmers in Germany, 791,000, or 14.4 per cent, are industrial wage-workers; and the overwhelming majority of these own less than two hectares of land each, namely, 743,000, which represents 22.9 per cent of the total number of farmers owning less than two hectares. Secondly, true to his usual practice, Mr. Bulgakov *distorted the statistics he adduced*. By an oversight he took from the page of the German Inquiry he quoted (*Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, B. 112, *S*. 49 ★) the figure of the area of land owned by *independent* trading farmers. The non-independent trading farmers (i.e., industrial wage-workers) hold *only* 1.84 per cent of the total area of agricultural land. 791,000 wage-workers own 1.84 per cent of the total area of land, while 25,000 landlords own 24 per cent. Truly a most insignificant "detail"!

wealthier, more prosperous peasants, whose "progress" and "prosperity" our knights of philistinism are so fond of presenting as the prosperity of the mass of the population. And in order to put a better complexion on this distortion, these knights majestically declare: "The peasant is a working man no less than the proletarian" (Bulgakov, II, 288). And the author expresses satisfaction at the fact that "workers' parties are more and more losing the anti-peasant tinge characteristic of them hitherto" (characteristic of them hitherto!) (289). "Hitherto", you see, they "left out of account the fact that peasant property is not an instrument of exploitation, but a condition for the application of labour". That is how history is written! Frankly, we cannot refrain from saying: Distort, gentlemen, but have a sense of measure! And the same Mr. Bulgakov has written a two-volume "study" of 800 pages chock-full of "quotations" (how correct they are we have repeatedly shown) from all sorts of inquiries, descriptions, monographs, etc. But not once, *literally not once*, has he attempted even to examine the relations between the peasants whose property is an instrument of exploitation and those peasants whose property is "simply" a condition for the application of labour. *Not once* has he presented systematic statistics (which, as we have shown, were contained in the sources he cited) concerning the types of farms, the standard of living, etc., of the peasants who hire labour, of the peasants who neither hire labour nor hire themselves out as labourers, and of the peasants who hire themselves out as labourers. More than that. We have seen that to prove the "progress of peasant farming" (peasant farming *in general*!) he has given data on the *Grossbauer* and opinions that confirm the progress of some and the impoverishment and proletarisation of others. He even sees a general "social regeneration" (*sic*!) in the rise of "well-to-do peasant farms" (II, 138; for general conclusion, cf. p. 456), as if well-to-do peasant farm were not synonymous with bourgeois, entrepreneur-peasant farm. His one attempt to extricate himself from this tangle of contradictions is the following still more entangled argument: "The peasantry, of course, does not constitute a homogeneous mass; this has been shown above [probably in his argument about such a petty detail as the industrial wage-labour performed by farmers?]; a constant struggle is here in proc-

ess between a differentiating trend and a levelling trend. But are these differences and even the antagonism of individual interests greater than those between the various strata of the working class, between urban and rural workers, between skilled and unskilled labour, between trade unionists and non-trade unionists? It is only by completely ignoring these differences within the worker estate (which cause certain investigators to see the existence of a fifth estate in addition to the fourth) that a distinction can be drawn between the allegedly homogeneous working class and the heterogeneous peasantry" (288). What a remarkably profound analysis! Confounding trade differences with class differences; confounding differences in the way of life with the different positions of the various classes in the system of social production—what better illustration is needed of the complete absence of scientific principles in the fashionable "criticism"* and of its practical tendency to obliterate, the very concept "class" and to eliminate the very idea of the class struggle. The agricultural labourer earns fifty kopeks a day; the enterprising peasant who employs day-labourers earns a ruble a day; the factory worker in the capital earns two rubles a day; the small provincial master earns one and a half rubles a day. Any more or less politically conscious worker would be able to say without difficulty to which class the representatives of these various "strata" belong, and in what direction the social activities of these various "strata"

* Let us recall the fact that reference to the *alleged* homogeneity of the working class was a favourite argument of Ed. Bernstein and of all his adherents. And as regards "differentiation", it was Mr. Struve who, in his *Critical Remarks*, profoundly observed: There is differentiation, but there is also levelling; for the objective student both these processes are of equal importance (in the same way as it made no difference to Shchedrin's objective historian whether Izyaslav defeated Yaroslav or vice versa).[86] There is a development of the money economy, but there are also reversions to natural economy. There is a development of large-scale factory production, but there is also a development of capitalist domestic industry (Bulgakov, II, 88: "*Hausindustrie* is nowhere near extinction in Germany"). An "objective" scientist must carefully gather facts and note things, "on the one hand" and "on the other", and (like Goethe's Wagner) "pass from book to book, from folio to folio" without making the least attempt to obtain a consistent view and build up a general idea of the process as a whole.

will tend. But for the representative of university science, or for the modern "Critic", this is such a profound wisdom that it is totally beyond assimilation,

VIII

GENERAL STATISTICS OF GERMAN AGRICULTURE FOR 1882 AND 1895. THE QUESTION OF THE MEDIUM FARMS

Having examined the detailed statistics of peasant farming, which are particularly important for us, because peasant farming is the centre of gravity of the modern agrarian question, let us now pass to the general statistics of German agriculture and verify the conclusions drawn from them by the "Critics". Below, in brief, are the principal returns of the censuses of 1882 and of 1895:

Groups of farms	No. of farms (thousands)		Cultivated area (1,000 hectares)		Relative numbers				Absolute increase or decrease	
					Farms		Area			
	1882	1895	1882	1895	1882	1895	1882	1895	Farms	Area
Under 2 hectares . . .	3,062	3,236	1,826	1,808	58.0	58.2	5.7	5.6	+174	− 18
2-5 hectares	981	1,016	3,190	3,286	18.6	18.3	10.0	10.1	+ 35	+ 96
5-20 "	927	999	9,158	9,722	17.6	18.0	28.7	29.9	+ 72	+564
20-100 "	281	282	9,908	9,870	5.3	5.1	31.1	30.3	+ 1	− 38
100 and over	25	25	7,787	7,832	0.5	0.4	24.5	24.1	± 0	+ 45
Totals . . .	5,276	5,558	31,869	32,518	100	100	100	100	+282	+649

Three circumstances must be examined in connection with this picture of change interpreted differently by Marxists and by the "Critics": the increase in the number of the smallest farms; the increase in latifundia, i.e., farms of one thousand hectares and over, in our table placed in the row of over one hundred hectares; and, lastly, the increase in the number of middle-peasant farms (5-20 hectares), which is the most striking fact, and the one giving rise to the most heated controversy.

The increase in the number of the smallest farms indicates an enormous increase in poverty and proletarisation; for the overwhelming majority of the owners of less than two hectares cannot obtain a livelihood from agriculture alone but must seek auxiliary employment, i.e., work for wages. Of course, there are exceptions: the cultivation of special crops, viticulture, market gardening, industrial crop cultivation, suburban farming generally, etc., render possible the existence of independent (at times even not small) farmers even on one and a half hectares. But out of a total of three million *farms*, these exceptions are quite insignificant. The fact that the mass of these small "farmers" (representing three-fifths of the total number) *are wage-labourers* is strikingly proved by the German statistics concerning the principal occupations of the farmers in the various categories. The following is a brief summary of those statistics:

Groups of farmers	Farms according to *principal* occupation (per cent)					Per cent of independent farmers with auxiliary occupations
	Independent		Non-independent labour	Other occupations	Total	
	Agriculture	Trade, etc.				
Under 2 hectares	17.4	22.5	50.3	9.8	100	26.1
2 to 5 "	72.2	16.3	8.6	2.9	100	25.5
5 to 20 "	90.8	7.0	1.1	1.1	100	15.5
20 to 100 "	96.2	2.5	0.2	1.1	100	8.8
100 and over "	93.6	1.5	0.4	4.2	100	23.5
Average	45.0	17.5	31.1	6.4	100	20.1

We see, thus, that out of the total number of German farmers only 45%, i.e., *fewer than half*, are independent with farming as their *main* occupation. And even of these independent farmers *one-fifth* (20.1 %) have auxiliary occupations. The principal occupation of 17.5% of the farmers is trading, industry, market gardening, and so forth (in these occupations they are "independent", i.e., occupy the position of masters and not of hired workers). *Almost one-third* (31.1 %) are hired workers ("not independent", employed in various branches of agriculture and industry). The principal

occupation of 6.4% of the farmers is office employment (in military service, civil service, etc.), the liberal professions, etc. Of the farmers with farms under two hectares, *one half* are hired workers; the "independent" farmers among these 3,200,000 "owners" represent a small minority, only 17.4% of the total. Of this number, 17%, *one-fourth* (26.1 %), are engaged in *auxiliary* occupations, i.e., are hired workers, not in their principal occupations (like the above-mentioned 50.3%), but in their side-line occupations. Even among the farmers owning from 2-5 hectares, only a little more than half (546,000 out of 1,016,000) are independent farmers without auxiliary occupations.

We see from this how amazingly untrue is the picture presented by Mr. Bulgakov when, asserting (erroneously, as we have shown) that the total number of persons actually engaged in agriculture has grown, he explains this by the "increase in the number of independent farms—as we already know, mainly middle-peasant farms, at the expense of the big farms" (II, 133). The fact that the number of middle-peasant farms has expanded most in proportion to the total number of farms (from 17.6% to 18%, i.e., a rise of 0.4%) does not in the least prove that the increase in the agricultural population is due principally to the growth in the number of middle-peasant farms. On the question as to which category has contributed most to the general increase in the number of farms, we have direct data that leave no room for two opinions: the total number of farms has risen by 282,000, of which the number of farms under two hectares increased by 174,000. Consequently, the larger agricultural population (if and insofar as it is larger at all) is to be explained precisely by the increase in the number of non-independent farms (the bulk of the farmers with farms under two hectares not being independent). The rise is greatest in the small allotment farms, which indicates growing *proletarisation*. Even the increase (by 35,000) in the number of farms of 2-5 hectares cannot be wholly attributed to the expanded number of *independent* farms, for of those farmers only 546,000 out of the total of 1,016,000 are independent, drawing no subsidiary earnings.

Coming now to the large farms, we must note, first of all, the following characteristic fact (of utmost importance for

the refutation of all apologists): the combination of agriculture with other occupations has diverse and opposite significance for the various categories of farmers. Among the small farmers it signifies proletarisation and curtailed independence; for in this category agriculture is combined with occupations like those of hired labourers, small handicraftsmen, small traders, and so forth. Among the big farmers, it signifies either a rise in the political significance of landed proprietorship through the medium of government service, military service, etc., or the combination of agriculture with forestry and agricultural industries. As we know, the latter phenomenon is one of the most characteristic symptoms of *capitalist* advance in agriculture. That is why the percentage of farmers who regard "independent" farming as their principal occupation (who are engaged in farming as masters and not as labourers) sharply increases with the increase in the size of the farms (17-72-90-96%), but drops to 93% in the category of farms of 100 hectares and over. In this group 4.2% of the farmers regard office employment (under the heading of "other occupations") as their principal occupation; 0.4% of the farmers regard "non-independent" work as their principal occupations (what is here discussed is not hired labourers but managers, inspectors, etc., cf. *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, B. 112, *S.* 49 ★). Similarly, we see that the percentage of independent farmers who engage in auxiliary occupations sharply diminishes with the increase in the size of the farms (26-25-15-9%), but greatly increases among the farmers possessing 100 hectares and over (23%).

In regard to the number of large farms (100 hectares and over) and the area of land they occupy, the statistics given above indicate a *diminution* in their share in the total number of farms and the total area. The question arises: Does this imply that large-scale farming is being crowded out by small and middle-peasant farming, as Mr. Bulgakov hastens to assume? We think not; and by his angry thrusts at Kautsky on this point Mr. Bulgakov merely exposes his inability to refute Kautsky's opinion on the subject. In the first place, the diminution in the proportion of the large farms is extremely small (from 0.47% to 0.45%, i.e., two-hundredths of one per cent of the total number of farms,

and from 24.43% to 24.088%, i.e., 35-hundredths of one per cent of the total area). It is a generally known fact that with the intensification of farming *it is* sometimes *necessary* to make a slight reduction in the area of the farm, and that the big farmers lease small lots of land remote from the centre of the estate in order to secure labourers. We have shown above that the author of the detailed description of the large- and small-scale farms in East Prussia openly admits the auxiliary role played by small in relation to big landownership, and that he strongly advises the settlement of labourers. Secondly, there can be no talk of the elimination of large-scale by small-scale farming, for the reason that data on the *size* of farms are not yet adequate for judging the *scale of production*. The fact that in this respect large-scale farming has made considerable progress is irrefutably proved by statistics on the use of machinery (see above), and on agricultural industries (to be examined in greater detail below, since Mr. Bulgakov gives an astonishingly incorrect interpretation of the German statistics on this subject). Thirdly, in the group of farms of 100 hectares and over a prominent place is occupied by *latifundia*, i.e., farms of 1,000 hectares and over. The number of these farms has increased proportionately more than the number of middle-peasant farms, namely, from 515 to 572, or by 11%, whereas the number of middle-peasant farms has increased from 926,000 to 998,000, or by 7.8%. The area of latifundia *has increased* from 708,000 hectares to 802,000 hectares, or by 94,000 hectares. In 1882 latifundia occupied 2.22% of the total land under cultivation; by 1895 they occupied 2.46%. On this point Mr. Bulgakov, in his work, supplements the groundless objections to Kautsky he made in *Nachalo* with the following even more groundless generalisation: "An index of the decline of large-scale farming," he writes, "is ... the increase of latifundia, although the progress of agriculture and the growth of intensive farming should be accompanied by the splitting-up of farms" (II, 126). Mr. Bulgakov unconcernedly goes on to talk about the "latifundia [!] degeneration" of large-scale farming (II, 190, 363). With what remarkable logic our "scholar" reasons: *since* the diminution in the size of farms *at times*, with the intensification of farming, implies an increase in production,

therefore an increase in the number and in the area of latifundia should, *in general*, signify a decline! But since logic is so bad, why not turn for help to statistics? The source from which Mr. Bulgakov draws his information contains a mass of data on latifundia farming. We present here some of the figures: in 1895, 572 of the largest agricultural enterprises occupied an area of 1,159,674 hectares, of which 802,000 hectares were given over to agriculture and 298,000 were covered by forests (a part of these latifundia proprietors were primarily timber merchants and not farmers). Livestock of all kinds is kept by 97.9% of these farmers, and draught animals by 97.7 % . Machines are used by 555 in this group, and, as we have seen, it is in this group that the *maximum number* of cases of the use of machines of various types occurs; steam ploughs are used by 81 farms, or 14% of the total number of latifundia farms; livestock is kept as follows: 148,678 head of cattle, 55,591 horses, 703,813 sheep, and 53,543 pigs. Sixteen of these farms are combined with sugar refineries, 228 with distilleries, 6 with breweries, 16 with starch factories, and 64 with flour-mills. Intensification may be judged from the fact that 211 of these farms cultivate sugar-beet (26,000 hectares are devoted to this crop) and 302, potatoes for industrial purposes; 21 (with 1,822 cows, or 87 cows per farm) sell milk to the cities, and 204 belong to dairy co-operative societies (18,273 cows, or 89 per farm). A very strange "latifundia degeneration" indeed!

We now pass to the middle-peasant farms (5-20 hectares). The proportion they represent of the total number of farms has increased from 17.6% to 18.0% (+0.4%), and of the total area, from 28.7% to 29.9% (+1.2%). Quite naturally, every "annihilator of Marxism" regards these figures as his trump card. Mr. Bulgakov draws from them the conclusion that "large-scale farming is being crowded out by small-scale farming", that there is a "tendency towards decentralisation", and so on and so forth. We have pointed out above that precisely with respect to the "peasantry" unclassified statistics are particularly unsuitable and can more than ever lead to error; it is precisely in this sphere that the processes of the formation of small enterprises and the "progress" of the peasant bourgeoisie are most likely to

conceal the proletarisation and impoverishment of the majority. In German agriculture as a whole we see an undoubted development of large-scale capitalist farming (the growth of latifundia, the increase in the use of machinery, and the development of agricultural industries), on the one hand; on the other, there is a still more undoubted growth of proletarisation and impoverishment (flight to the cities, expanded parcellisation of the land, growth in the number of small allotment holdings, increase in auxiliary hired labour, decline in the food consumption of the small peasants, etc.). Hence, it would be clearly improbable and impossible that these processes should not be current among the "peasantry". Moreover, the detailed statistics definitely indicate these processes and confirm the opinion that data on the size of farms alone are totally inadequate in this case. Hence, Kautsky rightly pointed out, on the basis of the general state of the capitalist development of German agriculture, the incorrectness of drawing from those statistics the conclusion that small-scale production was gaining over large-scale production.

We have, however, direct data abundantly proving that the increase in the number of "middle-peasant farms" indicates an *increase in poverty* and not in wealth and prosperity. We refer to the very data on draught animals which Mr. Bulgakov utilised so clumsily both in *Nachalo* and in his book. "If this required further proof," wrote Mr. Bulgakov with reference to his assertion that medium farming was progressing and large-scale farming declining, "then to the indices of the amount of labour-power we could add the indices of the number of draught animals. Here is an eloquent table."*

	Number of farms using animals for field work		Difference
	1882	*1895*	
Under 2 hectares	325,005	306,340	—18,665
2 to 5 " . . .	733,957	725,584	— 8,383
5 to 20 " . . .	894,696	925,103	+30,407
20 to 100 " . . .	279,284	275,220	— 4,064
100 and over " . . .	24,845	24,485	— 360
Totals . . .	2,257,797	2,256,732	— 1,065

* We reproduce the table as given by Mr. Bulgakov, merely adding the totals.

"The number of farms with draught animals declined among the large as well as the small farms, and increased only among the medium farms" (*Nachalo*, No. 1, p. 20).

Mr. Bulgakov could be pardoned for having, in a hurriedly written magazine article, erred in arriving at a conclusion *diametrically opposed* to the one the statistics on draught animals logically lead to. But our "strict scientist" repeated this error in his "investigation" (Vol. II, p. 127, where, moreover, he used the figures +30,407 and —360 as applying to the number of animals, whereas they apply to the number of farms using draught animals. But that, of course, is a minor point).

We ask our "strict scientist", who talks so boldly of the "decline of large-scale farming" (II, 127): What is the significance of the increase of 30,000 in the number of middle-peasant farms with draught animals when *the total number* of middle-peasant farms increased by 72,000 (II, 124)? Is it not clear from this that the *percentage* of middle-peasant farms with draught animals is *declining*? This being the case, should not Mr. Bulgakov have ascertained *what percentage* of farms in the various categories kept draught animals in 1882 and in 1895, the more so, since the data are given on the very page, and in the very table from which he took his absolute figures (*Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, B. 112, *S.* 31 ★)?

The data are here given:

	Percentage of farms using draught animals		Difference
	1882	*1895*	
Under 2 hectares	10.61	9.46	— 1.15
2-5 "	74.79	71.39	— 3.40
5-20 "	96.56	92.62	— 3.94
20-100 "	99.21	97.68	— 1.53
100 and over "	99.42	97.70	— 1.72
Average	42.79	40.60	— 2.19

Thus, the farms with draught animals diminished *on the average* by over 2 per cent; but the reduction was *above the average* among the small- and middle-peasant farms, and *below the average* among the large farms.* Moreover, it

* The smallest reduction is observed among the smallest farms, only a relatively insignificant proportion of which keeps draught

must not be forgotten that "it is precisely on the large farms that animal power is frequently displaced by mechanical power in the form of machines of various kinds, including steam-driven machines (steam ploughs, etc.)" (*Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, B. 112, *S.* 32★). Therefore, if in the group of large farms (of 100 hectares and over) the number with draught animals diminished by 360, and if at the same time the number with steam ploughs *increased by 615* (710 in 1882 and 1,325 in 1895), it is clear that, taken as a whole, large-scale farming has not lost, but has benefited thereby. Consequently, we come to the conclusion that the only group of German farmers who have undoubtedly *improved* their conditions of farming (with respect to the use of animals for field work, or the substitution of steam power for animals) are the *big* farmers, with farms of 100 hectares and over. In all the remaining groups the conditions of farming have deteriorated; and *they have deteriorated most in the group of middle-peasant farms*, in which the percentage of farms using draught animals has diminished most. The difference in the percentage of large farms (of 100 hectares and over) and medium farms (of 5-20 hectares) with draught animals was formerly less than 3% (99.42 and 96.56); the difference is now more than 5% (97.70 and 92.62).

This conclusion is still more strongly confirmed by the data on the types of draught animals used. The smaller the farm, the weaker the types: a relatively smaller number of oxen and horses and a larger number of cows, which are much weaker, are used for field work. The following data show the situation in this respect for the years 1882 and 1895:

For one hundred farms using draught animals the data are:

---

animal. We shall see further that it was precisely among those farms (and *only* among them) that the composition of the draught animals improved, i.e., a larger number of horses and oxen and a relatively smaller number of cows were being kept. As the authors of the German Inquiry (*S.* 32★) have rightly remarked, the farmers on the smallest allotments keep draught animals, not only for tilling the land, but also for "auxiliary work for wages". Consequently, in discussing the question of draught animals it would be erroneous to take these small allotments into account, since they are placed under altogether exceptional conditions.

	Cows only			Cows, along with horses or oxen		
	1882	*1895*		*1882*	*1895*	
Under 2 hectares . . .	83.74	82.10	— 1.64	85.21	83.95	— 1.26
2-5 " . . .	68.29	82.69	+ 1.13	72.95	74.93	+ 1.98
5-20 " . . .	18.49	20.30	+ 1.81	29.71	34.75	+ 5.04
20-100 " . . .	0.25	0.28	+ 0.03	3.42	6.02	+ 2.60
100 and over " . . .	0.00	0.03	+ 0.03	0.25	1.40	+ 1.15
Average	41.61	41.82	+ 0.21	48.18	50.48	+ 2.30

We see a general deterioration in the kind of draught animals used (for the reason indicated, the small allotment farms are not taken into account), the *greatest deterioration* occurring *in the group of middle-peasant farms*. In that group, of the total number of farms possessing draught animals, the percentage of those compelled to use *cows* as well as other animals, and of those compelled to use *cows only*, increased *most of all*. At the present time, more than one-third of the middle-peasant farms with draught animals have to use cows for field work (which, of course, leads to poorer tilling and, consequently, to a drop in the crop yield, as well as to a lower milk yield), while more than one-fifth use only cows for field work.

If we take the number of animals used for field work, we shall find in all groups (except the small allotment farms) an increase in the number of cows. The number of horses and oxen has changed as follows:

Number of Horses and Oxen Used for Field Work (Thousands)

	1882	*1895*	Difference
Under 2 hectares	62.9	69.4	+ 6.5
2-5 "	308.3	302.3	— 6.0
5-20 "	1,437.4	1,430.5	— 6.9
20-100 "	1,168.5	1,155.4	— 13.1
100 and over "	650.5	695.2	+44.7
Totals.	3,627.6	3,652.8	+25.2

With the exception of the small allotment farms, an increase in the number of draught animals proper is seen *only* among the big farmers.

Consequently, the general conclusion to be drawn from the changes in farming conditions with regard to animal and mechanical power employed for field work, is as

follows: *improvement* only among the big farmers; deterioration among the rest; the *greatest* deterioration *among the middle-peasant farms*.

The statistics for 1895 enable us to divide the middle-peasant farm group into two subgroups: with 5 to 10 hectares and with 10 to 20 hectares respectively. As was to be expected, in the first subgroup (which has by far the greater number of farms), farming conditions insofar as they affect the use of draught animals are incomparably worse than in the second. Of the total of 606,000 owners of 5-10 hectares, 90.5% possess draught animals (of the 393,000 with 10-20 hectares—95.8%), and of this number, 46.3% use cows for field work (17.9% in the 10-20 hectare group); the number using only cows amounts to 41.3% (4.2% in the 10-20 hectare group). It turns out that precisely the 5-10 hectare group, the one most poorly equipped with draught animals, shows the *greatest increase* from 1882 to 1895 both in the number of farms and in area. The relevant figures follow:

Percentage of Total

	Farms			Total area			Cultivated area		
	1882	*1895*		*1882*	*1895*		*1882*	*1895*	
5-10 hectares	10.50	10.90	+ 0.40	11.90	12.37	+ 0.47	12.26	13.02	+ 0.76
10-20 hectares	7.06	7.07	+ 0.01	16.70	16.59	— 0.11	16.48	16.88	+ 0.40

In the 10-20 hectare group the increase in the number of farms is quite insignificant. The proportion of the total area even diminished, while the proportion of the cultivated area increased to a much lesser extent than that of the farms in the 5-10 hectare group. Consequently, the increase in the middle-peasant farm group is accounted for mainly (and partly even exclusively) by the 5-10 hectare group, i.e., the very group in which farming conditions with regard to the use of draught animals are particularly bad.

Thus, we see that the statistics irrefutably reveal the true significance of the notorious increase in the number of middle-peasant farms: it is not an increase in prosperity, but *an increase in poverty*; not the progress of small farming, but *its degradation*. If the conditions of farming have deteriorated *most* among the middle-peasant farms, and if

these farms have been obliged to resort most extensively to the use of cows for field work, then, on the basis of this aspect of farming alone (one of the most important aspects of farming as a whole), it is not only our right but our duty to draw the conclusions regarding all the other aspects of farming. If the number of horseless farms (to use a term familiar to the Russian reader, and one quite applicable to the present case) has increased, if there is deterioration in the type of draught animals used, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the general maintenance of the animals and the treatment of the soil, as well as the food and the living conditions of the farmers, have likewise deteriorated; for in peasant farming, as all know, the harder the animals are worked and the worse they are fed, the harder the peasant works and the worse he is fed, and vice versa. The conclusions we drew above from Klawki's detailed study are fully confirmed by the mass data on all the small peasant farms in Germany.

IX

DAIRY FARMING AND AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN GERMANY. THE AGRICULTURAL POPULATION IN GERMANY DIVIDED ACCORDING TO ITS POSITION IN THE ECONOMY

We have dealt in such detail with the data on draught animals because these are the only data (apart from those dealing with machinery, which we have earlier examined) that enable us to obtain an inside view, as it were, of agriculture, of its equipment and organisation. All the other data—on the amount of land (which we have cited), and the number of livestock (to be cited below)—merely describe the external aspects of agriculture, equating things that are obviously unequal, since treatment of the soil and, consequently, its yield, and the quality and productivity of livestock are different in the different categories of farms. Although these differences are well known, they are usually forgotten in statistical compilations; the data on machines and draught animals alone enable us, at least to some extent, to form a judgement of these differences and to decide

who gains (on the whole) from them. If the large farms use, to a larger extent than the rest, particularly complex and costly machines, which alone are taken into account by statistics, then it is obvious that the other types of agricultural implements, which statistics ignore (ploughs, harrows, waggons, etc.), are of a better quality, are used in larger numbers, and (because the farms are bigger) are more fully utilised on the large farms. The same applies to livestock. The small farmer must inevitably make up for the lack of these advantages by greater industry and frugality (he has no other weapons in his struggle for existence), and for this reason those qualities are not merely casual but always and inevitably distinguish the small farmer in capitalist society. The bourgeois economist (and the modern "Critic", who on this question, as on all others, drags along at the tail of the bourgeois economist) calls this the virtue of thrift, perseverance, etc. (cf. Hecht and Bulgakov), ascribing it to the peasant as a merit. The socialist calls it overwork (*Ueberarbeit*) and under-consumption (*Unterkonsumption*) and holds capitalism responsible for it; he tries to open the eyes of the peasant to the deception practised by those who deliver Manilov orations, picturing social degradation as a virtue and thereby striving to perpetuate it.

We shall now deal with the data on the distribution of livestock among the various groups of German farmers in 1882 and 1895. The following are the main summaries (in percentages of total):

	Livestock (In value)			Cattle			Pigs		
	1882	*1895*	±	*1882*	*1895*	±	*1882*	*1895*	±
Under 2 hectares	9.3	9.4	+ 0.1	10.5	8.3	— 2.2	24.7	25.6	+ 0.9
2-5 "	13.1	13.5	+ 0.4	16.9	16.4	— 0.5	17.6	17.2	— 0.4
5-20 "	33.3	34.2	+ 0.9	35.7	36.5	+ 0.8	31.4	31.1	— 0.3
20-100 "	29.5	28.8	— 0.7	27.0	27.3	+ 0.3	20.6	19.6	— 1.0
100 and over "	14.8	14.1	— 0.7	9.9	11.5	+ 1.6	5.7	6.5	+ 0.8
Totals	100	100	—	100	100	—	100	100	—

Thus, the share of the total livestock owned by the large farms has diminished, whereas that of the middle-peasant farms has increased most. We speak of the total livestock, notwithstanding the fact that the statistics refer only to value, because the statisticians' assumption that the value of each animal is equal for all groups is obviously wrong.

The data on value, which make it possible to add different kinds of livestock (the result could have been obtained by expressing all the livestock in terms of cattle; but this would have entailed fresh calculations, without however, altering the conclusions materially), actually show the distribution of all livestock according to number and not according to real value. Since the livestock belonging to the big farmers is of a better quality and probably improves to a greater extent than that of the small farmers (to judge by the improvement in the implements), the figures considerably minimise the real superiority of large-scale farming.

With regard to certain types of livestock, it must be said that the diminution of the share of the large farms is entirely due to the decline in commercial sheep farming: from 1882 to 1895 the number of sheep diminished from 21,100,000 to 12,600,000, i.e., by 8,500,000; of this total diminution, farms of 20 hectares and over accounted for 7,000,000. As is known, stock raising for the dairy-product and meat markets is one of the developing branches of commercial livestock farming in Germany. For this reason we took the data on cattle and pigs, finding that the *greatest* progress in these two branches of livestock farming has been made on the large farms (of 100 hectares and over): share in the total number of cattle and pigs has increased most. This fact stands out the more for the reason that the area of livestock farms is usually smaller than that of agricultural farms and one would thus expect a more rapid development, not of large, but of middle, capitalist farms. The general conclusion to be drawn (in regard to the number, not the quality, of cattle) should be the following: the big farmers have lost most as a result of the sharp decline in commercial sheep farming, and this loss has not entirely, but only partly, been compensated by a greater increase (as compared with the small and medium farms) in the raising of cattle and pigs.

In speaking of dairy farming, we cannot ignore the extremely instructive and, as far as we know, unutilised material on this question furnished by German statistics. But this concerns the general question of combining agriculture with agricultural industries, and we are obliged to deal with it because of the amazing distortion of the facts of which Mr. Bulgakov is again guilty. As is known, the com-

bination of agriculture with the industrial processing of farm produce is one of the most outstanding characteristics of the specifically capitalist progress in agriculture. Some time back, in *Nachalo* (No. 3, p. 32), Mr. Bulgakov declared: "In my opinion, Kautsky vastly exaggerates the significance of this combination. If we take the statistics, we shall find that the amount of land connected with industry in this way is quite negligible." The argument is an extremely weak one; for Mr. Bulgakov does not dare to deny the technically progressive character of this combination. And as for the most important question, as to whether large-scale or small-scale production is the vehicle of this progress, he simply evades it. Since, however, the statistics provide a very definite reply to this question, Mr. Bulgakov resorts in his book to—*sit venia verbo*!*—cunning. He cites the percentage of farms (of all farms in general and not according to groups!) that are combined with agricultural industry in one form or another, and remarks: "It must not be supposed that they are combined principally with large farms" (II, 116). The very opposite is the case, most worthy professor: that is precisely what must be supposed; and the table you give (which does *not* show the percentage of farms combined with agricultural industries in relation to the total number of farms in *each* group) merely deceives the uninformed or inattentive reader. Below we give the combined data (to avoid filling our pages with figures) on the number of farms connected with sugar refining, distilling, starch making, brewing, and flour milling (consequently, the totals will show the number of *cases* in which agriculture is combined with agricultural industries), and we get the following picture:

	Total number of farms	Number of cases of combination with agricultural industries	
			Per cent
Under 2 hectares	3,236,367	11,364	0.01
2 to 5 "	1,016,318	13,542	1.09
5 to 20 "	998,804	25,879	2.03
20 to 100 "	281,787	8,273	2.52
100 and over "	25,061	4,006	15.72
Totals	5,558,317	63,064	1.14
Farms with 1000 hectares and over	572	330	57.69

* Save the mark!—*Ed.*

Thus, the percentage of farms in combination with agricultural industries is negligible in small-scale farming and reaches marked dimensions only in large-scale farming (and enormous dimensions on the latifundia, of which *more than half* enjoy the benefits of this combination). If this fact is compared with the above-cited data on the use of machines and draught animals, the reader will understand the pretentious nonsense of Mr. Bulgakov's aphorisms on the "illusion fostered by conservative" Marxists "that large-scale farming is the vehicle of economic progress and that small-scale farming is the vehicle of retrogression" (II, 260).

"The great bulk (of sugar-beet and potatoes for distilling alcohol!) was produced on the small farms," continues Mr. Bulgakov.

But the very opposite is the case: *it was precisely on the large farms*:

	Number of farms cultivating sugar-beets	Percentage of total number of farms in category	Area under beet (in hectares)	Per cent	Number of farms cultivating potatos for industrial purposes	Percentage of total number of farms in category
Under 2 hectares . . .	10,781	0.33	3,781	1.0	565	0.01
2-5 " . . .	21,413	2.10	12,693	3.2	947	0.09
5-20 " . . .	47,145	4.72	48,213	12.1	3,023	0.30
20-100 " . . .	26,643	9.45	97,782	24.7	4,293	1.52
100 and over " . . .	7,262	28.98	233,820	59.0	5,195	20.72
Totals	113,244	2.03	396,289	100.0	14,023	0.25
1000 hectares and over	211	36.88	26,127	—	302	52.79

Thus, we see again that the percentage of farms cultivating sugar-beet and potatoes for industrial purposes is negligible in the small-farm group, considerable in the large-farm group, and very high on the latifundia. The great bulk of the beets (83.7 per cent, judging by the area under beet) is produced on the large farms.*

* Mr. Bulgakov's sheer ... bad luck in his assertions on the processing of industrial crops is so strange that we involuntarily ask ourselves whether it may not be due to the fact that in citing the tables from the German Inquiry he *failed to see* that they do not show the

Similarly, Mr. Bulgakov failed to ascertain the "share of large-scale farming" in dairy farming (II, 117); yet this branch of commercial livestock farming is one of those that are developing with particular rapidity over the whole of Europe, as well as being one of the characteristics of the progress of agriculture. The following figures show the number of farms selling milk and dairy products to the towns:

	Number of farms	Percentage of total*	Percentage of total number of farms in group	Number of cows	Percentage of total	Number of cows per farms
Under 2 hectares	8,998	21.46	0.3	25,028	11.59	2.8
2-5 "	11,049	26.35	1.1	30,275	14.03	2.7
5-20 "	15,344	36.59	1.5	70,916	32.85	4.6
20-100 "	5,676	13.54	2.0	58,439	27.07	10.3
100 and over "	863	2.06	3.4	31,213	14.46	36.1
Totals	41,930	100.0	0.8	215,871	100.0	5.1
1000 hectares and over	21	—	3.7	1,822	—	87.0

Thus, here too, large-scale farming is in advance: the percentage of farmers engaged in the milk trade increases proportionately with the increase in the size of the farms, and it is highest on the latifundia ("latifundia degeneration"). For instance, the percentage of large farms (100 hectares and over) selling milk to the towns is more than twice that of the middle-peasant (5-20 hectare) farms (3.4 and 1.5 per cent).

The fact that the large farms (large in area) also engage in large-scale dairy farming is confirmed by the data on the number of cows per farm, viz., 36 per farm of 100 hectares

percentage of farms combined with agricultural industries *in relation to the total number of farms in the given group*. On the one hand, it is difficult to imagine that a "study" by a strict scientist could contain such a string of errors (accompanied by a string of smug conclusions). On the other hand, the identity of Mr. Bulgakov's tables with those in the German Inquiry (*S.* 40★ and 41★) is beyond doubt.... Oh those "strict scientists"!

* We have included this column so that the reader may form a clear idea of the methods employed by Mr. Bulgakov, who, for confirmation of his conclusions, refers only to this one column (taken from the above Inquiry).

and over, and even 87 on the latifundia. Generally speaking, the obviously capitalist farms (20 hectares and over) own 41.5% of the total number of cows, whose milk is sold to the towns, although these proprietors represent an insignificant percentage of the total number of farmers (5.52%), and a very small percentage of the number of farmers selling milk to the towns (15.6%). The progress of capitalist farming and the capitalist concentration of this branch of commercial livestock farming are therefore an indubitable fact.

But the concentration of dairy farming is by no means fully brought out by data on farms grouped according to area. It is clear *a priori* that there can and must be farms equal in area but unequal in regard to livestock in general, and to dairy cattle in particular. Let us, first, compare the distribution of the *total number* of cattle among the various groups of farms with the distribution of the total number of cows whose milk is sold to the towns.

	Percentage of		
	all cattle	cows whose milk is sold to towns	Difference
Under 2 hectares	8.3	11.6	+ 3.3
2 to 5 "	16.4	14.0	— 2.4
5 to 20 "	36.5	32.8	— 3.7
20 to 100 "	27.3	27.1	— 0.2
100 and over "	11.5	14.5	+ 3.0
Totals	100.0	100.0	

Thus, we see again that it is the *middle-peasant* farms which are *the worst off*; this group utilises the smallest share of its cattle for the urban milk trade (the most profitable branch of dairy farming). On the other hand, the large farms occupy a very favourable position and utilise a relatively large proportion of their cattle for the urban milk trade.* But the position of the smallest farms is most favourable of all, for they utilise the *largest* proportion of their cattle for the urban milk trade. Consequently, in this

* This difference is not to be explained by the fact that the proportion of oxen to the total number of cattle is unequal, for the percentage of oxen (at all events those used for field work) is higher on the large than on the middle-peasant farms.

group, special "milk" farms are developing on which agriculture is forced into the background, or even abandoned altogether (out of 8,998 farms in this group which sell milk to the towns, 471 have no arable land, and the farmers possess a total of 5,344 cows, or 11.3 cows per farm). We obtain an interesting picture of the concentration of dairy farming within one and the same group according to area of tilled land if, with the aid of the German statistics, we single out the farms with one and with two cows each:

Farms Selling Dairy Products to the Towns

	Number of farms	Farms with one cow	Farms with two cows	Farms with three cows or more			Total number of cows
				Number of farms	Number of cows	Cows per farm	
Under 50 *ares*	1,944	722	372	850	9,787	11.5	11,255
50 *ares* to 2 hectares . .	7,054	3,302	2,552	1,200	5,367	4.5	13,773
0 to 2 hectares.	8,998	4,024	2,924	2,050	15,156	7.4	25,028
2 to 5 "	11,049	1,862	4,497	4,690	19,419	4.3	30,275

Among the farms with a negligible amount of agricultural land (0-0.5 hectares) we see an enormous concentration of dairy farming: fewer than one half of these farmers (850 out of 1,944) concentrate in their hands almost nine-tenths of the total number of cows in this group (9,789 out of 11,255), with an average of 11.5 cows per farm. These are by no means "small" farmers; they are farmers having a turnover in all probability (especially those adjacent to big cities) of several thousand marks per annum, and it is doubtful whether they can manage without hired labour. The rapid growth of the towns causes a steady increase in the number of such "dairy farmers", and, of course, there will always be the Hechts, Davids, Hertzes, and Chernovs to console the mass of the small peasants crushed by poverty with the example of isolated cases of their fellow-farmers who have "got on in the world" by means of dairy farming, tobacco cultivation, and so forth.

In the 0.5-2 hectare group of farms we see that fewer than one-fifth of the total number of farmers (1,200 out of 7,054) concentrate in their hands over two-fifths of the total number of cows (5,367 out of 13,773); in the 2-5 hectare

group, fewer than one half of the farmers (4,690 out of 11,049) concentrate in their hands more than three-fifths of the total number of cows (19,419 out of 30,275), and so on. Unfortunately, the German statistics do not enable us to classify the groups with a larger number of cows.* But even the data presented fully confirm the general conclusion that *the concentration of capitalist agriculture is in reality much greater* than the data on area alone would lead us to suppose. The latter combine in one group farms small in area and producing small quantities of grain with farms producing dairy products, meat, grapes, tobacco, vegetables, etc., on a large scale. Of course, all these branches occupy a far inferior place as compared with the production of grain, and certain *general* conclusions hold good also in regard to statistics relating to area. But, in the first place, certain special branches of commercial agriculture are growing with

* To be more exact, the manner in which the German data *are grouped* does not enable us to do this; for the authors of the Inquiry had the data for each farm separately (on the basis of the replies listed in the questionnaires sent out to the farmers). In passing, we would state that this practice of gathering information from each farm separately adopted by German agricultural statistics is superior to the French method and apparently also to the English and other methods. Such a system enables us to classify the various types of farms not only according to area but also according to scale of farming (dairy farming, for example), according to the extent of use of machinery, degree of development of agricultural industries, and so forth. But this system requires a more thorough classification of the statistical data. First, the farms must be classified, not only according to one single feature (extent of area), but according to several features (number of machines, livestock, area of land under special crops, and so forth). Secondly, combined classifications must be made, i.e., the division of each group, classified according to area, into subgroups according to numbers of livestock, etc. Russian Zemstvo statistics on peasant farming can and should serve as a model in this respect. While German government statistics are superior to Russian *government* statistics in their fullness and comprehensiveness, in their uniformity and exactness, and in the rapidity of their preparation and publication, our *Zemstvo* statistics are superior to the European partial inquiries and investigations because of the remarkable fullness and detailed analysis of certain particular data. Russian Zemstvo statistics have for a long time included surveys of individual farms and presented various group tables and the combined tables we have mentioned. A close study of Russian Zemstvo statistics by Europeans would no doubt give a strong impetus to the progress of social statistics generally.

particular rapidity in Europe, constituting a distinguishing feature of its *capitalist* evolution. Secondly, the circumstance referred to is frequently forgotten with reference to certain examples, or to certain districts, and this opens a wide field for petty-bourgeois apologetics, samples of which were presented by Hecht, David, Hertz, and Chernov. They referred to tobacco growers, who, judged by the size of their farms, are *echte und rechte Kleinbauern*,* but, if judged by the extent of their tobacco plantations, are by no means "small" farmers. Moreover, if we examine the data on tobacco growing separately, we shall find capitalist concentration in this area also. For instance, the total number of tobacco growers in Germany in 1898 was estimated at 139,000, with a cultivation of 17,600 hectares of tobacco land. But of these 139,000, some 88,000, or 63 per cent, together owned not more than 3,300 hectares, i.e., only one-fifth of the total area of land under tobacco. The other four-fifths were in the hands of 37% of the tobacco growers.**

The same applies to grape growing. As a general rule, the area of the "average" vineyard, in Germany, for example, is very small: 0.36 hectares (344,850 growers and 126,109 hectares of vineyards). But the vineyards are distributed as follows: 49% of the growers (with 20 or fewer *ares* of vineyards) have only 13% of the total area of vineyards; the "middle" growers (20-50 *ares*), representing 30% of the total, hold 26% of the total area of vineyards, whereas the big

* Genuine small peasants.—*Ed.*

** *Die deutsche Volkswirtschaft am Schlusse des 19. Jrhd.* (*German National Economy at the End of the Nineteenth Century.—Ed.*), Berlin, 1900, *S.* 60. This is a very rough computation based on the fiscal returns. For Russia, we have the following data on the distribution of tobacco growing in three uyezds of Poltava Gubernia: of the total of 25,089 peasant farms growing tobacco, 3,015 farms (less than one-eighth) have 74,565 dessiatines under grain out of a total of 146,774 dessiatines, or more than one half, and 3,239 dessiatines under tobacco out of a total of 6,844 dessiatines, or nearly one half. By grouping these farms according to the tobacco area we get the following: 324 farms (out of 25,089) have two or more dessiatines, comprising a total of 2,360 out of 6,844 dessiatines. These belong to the big capitalist tobacco planters, notorious for their outrageous exploitation of the workers. Only 2,773 farms (a little more than one-tenth) had over half a dessiatine each under tobacco, comprising altogether 4,145 out of 6,844 dessiatines under tobacco. See *A Review of Tobacco Growing in Russia*, Issues II and III, St. Petersburg, 1894.

growers (half a hectare and over), representing 20% of the total, hold 61 % of the total area of vineyards, or more than three-fifths.* Still more concentrated is market gardening (*Kunst- und Handelsgärtnerei*), which is rapidly developing in all capitalist countries in direct dependence on the growth of large cities, big railroad stations, industrial settlements, etc. The number of market gardening enterprises in Germany in 1895 is estimated at 32,540, with an area of 23,570 hectares, or an average of less than one hectare each. But more than half of this area (51.39%) is concentrated in the hands of 1,932 proprietors, or 5.94% of all the market gardeners. The size of the market gardens and the area of the rest of the land the big farmers utilise for agriculture can be judged from the following figures: 1,441 market gardeners have vegetable gardens ranging from two to five hectares, making an average of 2.76 hectares per vegetable farm, and total land amounting to an average of 109.6 hectares per farm; 491 farmers have vegetable gardens of five hectares and over, making an average of 16.54 hectares per farm, and total land amounting to an average of 134.7 hectares per farm.

Let us return to dairy farming, the data on which help us to judge the significance of co-operative societies, which Hertz regards as a panacea for the evils of capitalism. Hertz is of the opinion that "the principal task of socialism" is to support these co-operative societies (op. cit., *S*. 21, Russian translation, p. 62; *S*. 89, Russian translation, p. 214), and Mr. Chernov, who, as might be expected, bruises his forehead in the act of ardent prostration before the new gods, has invented a theory of the "non-capitalist evolution of agriculture" with the aid of co-operative societies. We shall have a word or two to say on the theoretical significance of this sort of remarkable discovery. For the moment, we shall note that the worshippers of co-operative societies

* It is of interest to note that in France, where vine growing is incomparably more developed than in Germany (1,800,500 hectares), the concentration of vineyards is also more considerable. However, we have only the general statistics on area to enable us to form a judgement; for in France data are not gathered on individual farms, and the actual number of growers is unknown. In Germany 12.83% of the total vineyards belong to growers owning ten or more hectares of land. In France, however, 57.02% of the vineyards belong to this category of growers.

are always eager to talk of what it is "possible" to achieve by co-operative societies (cf. the instance given above). We, however, prefer to show what is actually achieved by the aid of co-operative societies under the present capitalist system. On the occasion of the census of enterprises and occupations in Germany in 1895 a register was made of all farms participating in co-operatives for the sale of dairy products (*Molkereigenossenschaften und Sammelmolkereien*), as well as of the number of cows from which each farmer obtained milk and milk products for sale. As far as we know, those are perhaps the only *mass* data that determine with precision, not only the extent to which farmers of various categories participate in co-operative societies, but, what is particularly important, the economic, so to speak, extent of this participation, viz., the size of the particular branch of each farm in the co-operative society (the number of cows providing products for sale organised by co-operative societies). We cite the figures, divided into the five principal groups according to area of farms:

Farms Participating in Co-operative Societies for the Sale of Dairy Products

	Number of such farms	Percentage of farms in given category	Percentage of farms in all categories*	Number of cows on such farms	Percentage of total number of cows		Average number of cows per farm
Under 2 hectares . .	10,300	0.3	6.95	18,556	1.71		1.8
2-5 " . .	31,819	3.1	21.49	73,156	6.76		2.3
5-20 " . .	53,597	5.4	36.19	211,236	19.51		3.9
20-100 " . .	43,561	15.4	29.42	418,563	38.65	72.02	9.6
100 and over " . .	8,805	35.1	5.95	361,435	33.37		41.0
Totals . . .	148,082	2.7	100	1,082,946	100		7.3
1000 hectares and over	204	35.6	—	18.273	—		89.0

Thus, only an insignificant minority (3-5%) of the small farmers participate in co-operative societies—in all probability an even smaller percentage than that of capitalist farms in the lower groups. On the other hand, the percentage

* Mr. Bulgakov stated: "The share of large-scale farming will be seen from the following figures" (II, 117) and he cited *only* these figures, which do not reveal "the share of large-scale farming, but (unless compared with other data) rather serve *to obscure* it.

of the large, obviously capitalist, farms which participate in co-operative societies is from three to seven times greater than that of even the middle-peasant farms. The percentage of the latifundia participating in co-operatives is largest of all. We can now form an idea of the boundless naïveté of the Austrian Voroshilov, Hertz, who, in retorting to Kautsky, states that the "German Agricultural Co-operative Wholesale Society [*Bezugsvereinigung*], with which the largest co-operative societies are affiliated, represents *1,050,000 farmers*" (*S.* 112, Russian translation, p. 267, Hertz' italics) from which he concludes that *this means* that not only big farmers (holding more than 20 hectares, who number 306,000) participate in these co-operatives, but peasants too! Hertz had only to ponder a little over his own assumption (that *all* the large farms participate in co-operatives), in order to realise that if all big farmers are members of co-operative societies, this *implies* that of the rest a *smaller percentage* participate in them, which means that Kautsky's conclusion concerning *the superiority of large-scale over small-scale farming even with respect to co-operative organisation* is fully confirmed.

But still more interesting are the data on the number of cows furnishing the products, the sale of which is organised by the co-operatives. The *overwhelming majority* of these cows, *almost three-fourths* (72%), belong to big farmers engaged in *capitalist dairy farming* and owning ten, forty, and (on the latifundia) even eighty cows per farm. And now let us listen to Hertz. "We assert that *co-operative societies bring most benefit to the small and smallest farmers...*" (op. cit., *S.* 112, Russian translation, p. 269, Hertz' italics). The Voroshilovs are alike everywhere: be it in Russia or in Austria. When the Voroshilovs beat their breasts and exclaim vehemently, "We assert", we can be quite sure that they are asserting that which is not.

To conclude our review of German agrarian statistics, let us examine briefly the general situation in regard to the distribution of the agricultural population according to its position in the economy. Of course, we take agriculture proper (A 1, and not A 1 to 6, according to the German nomenclature, i.e., we do not include among the agriculturists fishermen, lumbermen, and hunters); we then take the

data on persons for whom agriculture is the *principal occupation*. German statistics divide this population into three main groups: (a) independent (viz., farmer owners, tenant farmers, etc.), (b) non-manual employees (managers, foremen, supervisors, office clerks, etc.), and (c) labourers. The last-named group is split up into the following four subgroups: (c^1) "members of families employed on a farm belonging to the head of the family—father, brother, etc.," in other words, labourers that are members of the family, as distinct from hired labourers, to which category all the other subgroups of group c belong. Clearly, therefore, in order to study the social composition of the population (and its capitalist evolution), the labourers that are members of the family must not be grouped with the hired labourers, as is usually done, but with the farmers in group *a*; for they are in fact the farmers' partners, enjoying right of inheritance, etc. Other subgroups are: (c^2) agricultural labourers, men and women (*Knechte und Mägde*), and (c^3) "agricultural day-labourers and other labourers (shepherds, herdsmen) owning or renting land". Consequently, the last-named subgroup consists of persons who are at the same time farmers and wage-labourers, i.e., an intermediate and transitional group which should be placed in a special category. Finally, there is the subgroup (c^4) "ditto—neither owning nor renting land". In this way, we obtain three main groups: I. Farmers—owners of land and the members of their families. II. Farmers—owners of land and at the same time wage-labourers. III. Wage-workers not owning land (non-manual employees, labourers, and day-labourers). The following table illustrates the manner in which the rural population* of Ger-

* We speak only of the "active" population (as the French term it; in German, *erwerbsthätige*), i.e., those actually engaged in agriculture, not including domestic servants and those members of families who are not regularly and permanently engaged in agricultural work. Russian social statistics are so undeveloped that we still find lacking a special term like "*active*", "*erwerbsthätig*", "*occupied*". Yanson, in his analysis of the data on the occupations of the population of St. Petersburg (*St. Petersburg According to the Census of 1890*), employs the term "independent"; but this is not a suitable term, for it usually implies masters, and, consequently, division according to participation or non-participation in industrial activity (in the broad sense of the term) is confused with division according to the position occupied in industry (individual self-employed workman).

many was distributed among these groups in the years 1882 and 1895:

	Active (self-employed) population engaged in agriculture as the main occupation (thousands)			
	1882	*1895*		
(a) Farm owners	2,253	2,522	+ 269	
(c[1]) Members of farmers' families	1,935	1,899	— 36	
I.	4,188	4,421	+ 233	+5.6%
(c[2]) Labourers with allotments (II)	866	383	— 483	—55.8%
I + II	5,004	4,804	— 250	
(b) Non-manual employees	47	77	+ 30	
(c[3]) Labourers	1,589	1,719	+ 130	
(c[4]) Labourers without allotments .	1,374	1,445	+ 71	
III	3,010	3,241	+ 231	+ 7.7%
Totals . . .	8,064	8,045	— 19	— 0.2%

Thus, the active population has diminished, although only slightly. Among this population we see a diminution in the landowning section (I+II) and an increase in the landless section (III). This clearly shows that *the expropriation of the rural population is progressing*, and that it is precisely the small landowners who are being expropriated; for we know by now that the wage-labourers with small plots of land belong to the group of smallest farmers. Furthermore, of the persons owning land, the number of farmer-labourers is diminishing, while the number of farmers is increasing. We see, therefore, *the disappearance of middle groups and the growth of the extreme groups*: the intermediary group is disappearing; *capitalist contradictions* are becoming *more acute*. Of the wage-labourers there is an increase in the number of those entirely expropriated, while the number owning land is diminishing. Of the farmers there is an increase in the number directly owning enterprises, while

---

The term "productive population" could be used, but even that would be inexact, for the military, rentier, and similar classes are not at all "productive". Perhaps the most suitable term would be "self-employed" population, viz., those engaged in some "trade" or other occupation (= producing an income) as distinct from those who live at the expense of those "self-employed".

the number employed in the enterprises of heads of families is diminishing. (In all probability the latter circumstance is due to the fact that in the majority of cases working members of peasant families receive no pay whatever from the head of the family and for that reason are particularly prone to migrate to the cities.)

If we take the data on the population for whom agriculture is an *auxiliary* occupation, we shall see that this (active or self-employed) population increased from 3,144,000 to 3,578,000, i.e., by 434,000. This increase is almost entirely due to the growth in the number of working members of farmers' families, which expanded by 397,000 (from 664,000 to 1,061,000). The number of farmers increased by 40,000 (from 2,120,000 to 2,160,000); the number of labourers owning land increased by 51,000 (from 9,000 to 60,000); while the number of landless labourers diminished by 54,000 (from 351,000 to 297,000). This enormous increase from 664,000 to 1,061,000, or 59.8% in the course of 13 years, is further evidence of the growth of proletarisation—the growth of the number of *peasant*s, members of peasants' families, who have come to regard agriculture merely as an *auxiliary* occupation. We know that in those cases the principal occupation is working for wages (next in importance being petty trading, handicraft, etc.). If we combine the numbers of all working members of peasant families—those for whom agriculture is the principal occupation and those for whom it is merely an auxiliary occupation—we shall get the following: 1882—2,559,000; 1895—2,960,000. This increase may easily provide occasion for erroneous interpretations and apologetic conclusions, especially if it is compared with the number of wage-labourers, which, on the whole, is diminishing. Actually, the general increase is obtained by the *diminution* in the number of working members of peasant families for whom agriculture is the principal occupation and by the *increase* in the number for whom it is an auxiliary occupation; the latter amounted in 1882 to only 21.7% of the total number of working members of peasant families, whereas in 1895 they amounted to 35.8%. Thus, the statistics covering the *entire* agricultural population distinctly reveal to us the two processes of proletarisation to which orthodox Marxism has always pointed, and

which opportunist critics have always tried to obscure by stereotyped phrases. These processes are: on the one hand, the growing separation of the peasantry from the land, the expropriation of the rural population, which either moves to the towns or is turned from landowning labourers into landless labourers; on the other hand, the development of "auxiliary employment" among the peasantry, i.e., the combination of agriculture with industry, which marks the first stage of proletarisation and always leads to increased poverty (longer working day, malnutrition, etc.). Regarded only from the external aspect, these two processes, to a certain extent, even tend in opposite directions: an increase in the number of landless labourers and an increase in the number of working members of peasant landowning families. For this reason, to confound the two processes, or to ignore either of them, may easily lead to the crudest blunders, numerous examples of which are scattered through Bulgakov's work.[87] Finally, the occupational statistics reveal to us a remarkable increase in the number of non-manual employees,* from 47,000 to 77,000, or 63.8%. Simultaneously with the growth of proletarisation, there is a growth of large-scale capitalist production, which requires non-manual employees to a degree rising in proportion to the increase in the use of machinery and the development of agricultural industries.

Thus, notwithstanding his vaunted "details", Mr. Bulgakov proved unable to grasp the German data. In the occupational statistics he merely saw an increase in the number of landless labourers and a diminution in the number of landowning labourers, which he took to be an index of the "changes that have taken place in the organisation of agricultural labour" (II, 106). But these changes in the organisation of labour in German agriculture as a whole have remained for him a fortuitous and inexplicable fact, in no way connected with the general structure and evolution of agricultural capitalism. In reality, it is only one of the aspects of the process of capitalist development. Mr. Bulgakov's

* In regard to this fact Mr. Bulgakov delivered himself in *Nachalo* of the banal joke, "The increase in the number of officers in a dwindling army". A vulgarised view of the organisation of labour in large-scale production!

opinion notwithstanding, the technical progress of German agriculture is first and foremost the progress of large-scale production, as has been irrefutably proved by statistics relating to the use of machinery, the percentage of enterprises using draught animals and the type used, the development of industries connected with agriculture, the growth of dairy farming, and so forth. Inseverably connected with the progress of large-scale production are the growth of the proletarisation and expropriation of the rural population; the expanding number of small allotment farms and of peasants whose principal source of livelihood is auxiliary occupations; the increased poverty among the middle-peasant population, whose farming conditions have deteriorated most (the largest increase in the percentage of horseless farms and in the percentage of farms using cows for field work), and, consequently, whose general living conditions and quality of land cultivation have undergone greatest deterioration.

FROM MARX TO MAO
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

THE "UNITY" CONFERENCE OF R.S.D.L.P. ORGANISATIONS ABROAD

SEPTEMBER 21-22 (OCTOBER 4-5), 1901 [88]

1

SPEECH DELIVERED ON SEPTEMBER 21 (OCTOBER 4)

(NOTE FROM THE MINUTES)

Comrades!

Let us begin with the point on which the success of the conference depends.

As a representative of *Iskra* I consider it necessary to touch on the history of our attitude to the other organisations. *Iskra* has been completely independent from its very inception, recognising only ideological connections with Russian Social-Democracy and functioning on instructions from many comrades in Russia. In its first issue *Iskra* declared that it would not deal with the organisational differences that had arisen in the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad[89] and attached the greatest importance to its position on matters of principle.*

Some members of the Union Abroad proposed that we hold a conference to come to an agreement with the organisations abroad. We understood the proposal to mean that a group in the Union was in agreement with our principles, which made it possible that the Union would also accept them. The revolutionary organisation *Sotsial-Demokrat*,[90] voiced agreement, notwithstanding considerable organisational differences, as well as differences on principle. The Union, unfortunately, refused to negotiate. When a new group of initiators[91] appeared, the Union consented to the negotiations. Since the Union had no distinct physiognomy and since a new trend towards revolutionary Marxism had manifested itself within it it was to be hoped that an agreement

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 378-79.—*Ed.*

on principle would be possible. *Iskra* and *Sotsial-Demokrat* again consented, and the Geneva Conference was held. At the beginning of our session Comrade Kruglov read the conference resolution without any comments. No one from the Union took the floor in opposition.

We affirm that in its tenth issue, *Rabocheye Dyelo* made a decisive break with the traditions of revolutionary Marxism and opposed the agreement on principles elaborated at the Geneva Conference, with whose tendencies the Union is apparently in agreement.

In view of this, my criticism will be directed against the editors of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, and not against the entire Union.

Let us compare the Geneva resolution with the articles in issue No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*.

The Geneva resolution astonishes one by its amazing detail and its stressing of points that are considered generally known.

Point 1 of the agreement on principles reads: "Accepting the basic principles of scientific socialism and acting in solidarity with international revolutionary Social-Democracy, we reject all attempts to introduce opportunism into the class struggle of the proletariat—attempts that find expression in so-called Economism, Bernsteinism, Millerandism,[92] etc." Here there is an obvious allusion to something; obviously a struggle was taking place between opportunism and revolutionary Marxism. Whatever the contents of issue No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo* may be, it cannot, in any event, destroy the historical fact that the Geneva Conference took place and that the resolution it adopted can serve as a basis for unification. In its third point, for instance, the Geneva resolution recognises that Social-Democracy should assume leadership in the struggle for democracy. Apparently there were previous differences of opinion on this point, too. In its effort to keep well away from opportunism, the resolution descends almost to the ridiculous. (See Point "e", in Paragraph 5.) It follows, therefore, that there were differences even on such elementary questions. Now let us compare that resolution with the articles in *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10). Unfortunately I have had the articles at my disposal for three days only, not more than enough for a cursory examination.

These articles give a detailed explanation of the difference in our views; there are some just remarks addressed to *Zarya* and *Iskra* which we shall turn to account. But that is not what concerns us at the moment; we are concerned with the principles underlying the articles. The position on principle adopted by *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10) contradicts the position adopted by the Union delegates at the Geneva Conference. It is impossible to reconcile these two positions. It is necessary to reveal the differences contained in them in order to know on what basis the Union takes its stand, in order to know whether it is possible to effect ideological unity, without which organisational unity would be meaningless; we have not sought and could not seek such unity. On pages 32 and 33 of issue No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo* the author of the article demurs at the contraposing of Mountain and Gironde in international Social-Democracy.[93] Look but at the Geneva Conference—does it not represent a clash between the Mountain and the Gironde? Does not *Iskra* represent the Mountain? Did not *Iskra* in its very first editorial declare itself against organisational unity prior to the demarcation of ideological boundaries? In *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, it is stated that even the most rabid Bernsteinians take a stand on the basis of class interests. The resolution makes special mention of Bernsteinism, to refute which the delegates at the conference devoted considerable effort; and now, in the articles of *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10), the same old fare is rehashed. What is this, a challenge or a sneer? To what end the effort we put forth? People are simply laughing at our pains to elaborate a theoretical basis. We must not forget that without a common ideological basis there can be no question of unity. In the same article, moreover, we get the prospect of a widened scope of our differences. On page 33, for example, the author writes: "Perhaps our differences arise out of different interpretations of Marxism?" Again, I ask, to what end the effort we put forth?

Point "c" of Paragraph 4 of the Geneva resolution speaks of the necessity to struggle against all opponents of revolutionary Marxism; however, we are told that perhaps, in general, we understand Marxism differently.

I must also mention that all this is accompanied by arguments on the harmfulness of fettering thought, etc., which

is precisely what all the Bernsteinians are saying. This was stated at the Lübeck *Parteitag*,[94] and it is also repeated by the followers of Jaurès,[95] while the points of the agreement say nothing about this, since the agreement was made expressly on the basis of revolutionary Marxism. Even faint manifestations of criticism would have led to a complete breach. We have met to discuss the content of the opinions and not the freedom of opinion. References to French and German models are most unfortunate. The Germans have already achieved what we are still struggling for. They have a united Social-Democracy which exercises leadership in the political struggle. Our Social-Democracy is not yet the leader of the revolutionary groups; on the contrary, there are signs of the revival of other revolutionary tendencies. In the articles in *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10), not only are there no signs of a complete break in principle with opportunism, there is even something worse—there is praise of the predominance of the spontaneous movement. I am not cavilling at words. All of us, the comrades from *Iskra*, the comrades from *Sotsial-Demokrat*, and I, are calling attention only to the basic tendencies of the articles; but those words, as the Germans say, *ins Gesicht schlagen*.* Particularly as regards these points the Geneva resolution could not be clearer. The recently emerged Workers' Party for the Political Liberation of Russia[96] chants in harmony with these publications.

Consider in the article the famous distinction between tactics-as-plan and tactics-as-process. The author says that tactics-as-plan is in contradiction to the fundamental principle of revolutionary Marxism, and he thinks that one may speak of tactics-as-"process", taken to mean the growth of the Party's tasks, which increase as the Party grows. In my opinion this is simply unwillingness to discuss. We have expended so much time and effort on the formulation of definite political tasks, and at the Geneva Conference so much was said about them; and now we are suddenly being talked to about "tactics-as-plan" and "tactics-as-process". To me this represents a return to the specific, narrow Bernsteinian product of *Rabochaya Mysl* which asserted that only that

* Offend the nostrils.—*Ed.*

struggle should be conducted which is possible, and that the possible struggle is that which is going on. We on our part maintain that only the distortion of Marxism is growing. The Geneva resolution says that no stages are necessary for the transition to political agitation, and then an article suddenly appears in which "the literature of exposure" is contraposed to the "proletarian struggle". Martynov writes about students and liberals, holding that they can worry about democratic demands themselves. We, however, think that the entire peculiarity of Russian Social-Democracy consists in the fact that the liberal democracy has not taken the initiative in the political struggle. If the liberals know better what they have to do and can do it themselves, there is nothing for us to do. The author of the article goes as far as to assume that the government will adopt concrete, administrative measures of its own accord.

As we all know, there were differences of opinion on the question of terror at the Geneva Conference. After the Conference, a part of the Union Abroad, the Bund,[97] at its conference, came out decisively against terror. On page 23, however, the author writes that we "do not wish to set ourselves against the terrorist moods". This is the sheerest opportunism.*

Published for the first time

Published according to the text of the minutes

---

* The minutes break off at this point.—*Ed.*

2

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE UNION OF RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS ABROAD AT THE "UNITY" CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER 21 (OCTOBER 4), 1901

1. Do all the three organisations accept, in principle, the resolution of the June Conference?

2. Is the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad willing and able so to organise publication activity as to render impossible unprincipled and opportunist deviations from revolutionary Marxism—deviations that create confusion of mind so dangerous for our movement—and to eliminate all flirting with tacit and avowed Bernsteinism, as well as servile acceptance of the elementary forms and spontaneity of the movement, which must inevitably lead to the conversion of the labour movement into an instrument of bourgeois democracy?

First published in December 1901, in the pamphlet, *Documents of the "Unity" Conference*

Published according to the text in the pamphlet

FIGHTING THE FAMINE-STRICKEN

What astonishing solicitude for the famine-stricken our government is displaying! What an amazingly long circular (of August 17) the Minister of the Interior has issued to the governors of the affected gubernias! A veritable literary work, more than sixteen pages long, written by Mr. Sipyagin to explain the government's food policy in its entirety. The document was apparently published to impress the "public", as if to say: See how solicitous we are, how prompt we are with relief measures, how providential we are in organising in advance food-kitchens and all forms and phases of their activity! It must be admitted that the circular issued by the Ministry of the Interior certainly does create an impression, both by its bulk and (if one has the patience to read it through) by its contents. A frank exposition of the government's policy is always the best means for agitation against the tsarist government and, while expressing our profound gratitude to Mr. Sipyagin, we make bold to suggest that the other ministers speak more frequently of their programme in circulars published for general information.

If one has the patience to read through Mr. Sipyagin's circular to the end, we said. A great deal of patience will be required, for three-fourths, nay, nine-tenths of the circular consists of the usual official banalities. It is a rehash of things known for years and repeated a hundred times even in the "Code of Laws".[98] It is a mass of circumlocution, a detailed description of the ceremonial in the relations between Chinese mandarins; it is in the grand style of the chancelleries, with periods thirty-six lines long, in a "jargon" that makes the heart bleed for our native Russian

language. As you read deeply into this effusion, you feel as though you were in a Russian police-station with its musty walls and its all-pervading specific stench, in which the officials personify in their appearance and bearing the most case-hardened bureaucracy, while in the courtyard, visible through the window, gloomy buildings loom reminiscent of the torture chamber.

Three main points in the government's new programme attract particular attention: first, greater power is vested in the individual officials and care is taken that the bureaucratic spirit and service discipline should be strengthened and protected from any breath of fresh air; secondly, a scale of relief is fixed for the famine-stricken, viz., regulations on the rationing of bread to be given to a "needy" family; and, thirdly, despairing horror is expressed at the fact that "disloyal" persons, capable of arousing the people against the government, are rushing in to help the famine-stricken, and timely measures against such "agitation" are provided for. We shall deal with each of these points in detail.

Only a year has elapsed since the government deprived the Zemstvos of the right to manage food affairs and transferred that administration to the rural superintendents and uyezd congresses (law of June 12, 1900). Now before the law has come into force, it has been repealed by a mere circular. The reports of a number of provincial governors sufficed to convince the government that the law had become unsuitable! This makes plainly evident the worthlessness of laws that are turned out like pancakes by the St. Petersburg government departments without prior discussion on a serious level by people really informed and capable of expressing an independent opinion, and without serious intention to create a more satisfactory state of affairs, laws that are dictated by the ambition of some cunning minister eager to further his career and display his loyalty. The Zemstvo is not loyal—take the food administration out of its hands! But before this could be done it was discovered that the rural superintendents and even the uyezd congresses, consisting exclusively of government officials, were inclined to discuss matters too much. Apparently there were rural superintendents stupid enough to call famine famine and simple enough to think it necessary

to fight against the famine, and not against those who really want to help the famine-stricken; and in all probability there were officials in the uyezd congresses who were not subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior and who also failed to understand the real tasks of "home politics". And so, by the mere circular of a minister a new "Central Uyezd" —no, this is not a printer's error—a "Central Uyezd Food Board" is set up, the whole purpose of which is to prevent the infiltration of disloyal persons and disloyal ideas and the commission of imprudent acts in the administration of food distribution. Thus, the Minister considers as imprudent and prohibits the "premature" compilation (i.e., not immediately before the bread distribution) of lists of the needy. It arouses, he says, "exaggerated hopes" among the people! The Central Uyezd Food Board is concentrated in the hands of *a single person*, and the Ministry recommends *the uyezd marshal of the nobility* for the post. Indeed, that official is so closely connected with the governor and performs so many police functions that he will doubtless be able to understand the true spirit of the food policy. Moreover, he is a big local landed proprietor, respected and trusted by all the landlords. A man of that type will certainly understand, as no one else will, the Minister's profound idea on the "demoralising" effects of relief given to persons "able to dispense with it". As for the gubernatorial powers, the Minister refers to this subject at the very beginning of the circular and repeats over and over again that the governor is responsible for everything, that all must obey the governor, that the governor must be able to take "special" measures, etc. To this day the governor in a Russian province has always been a real satrap upon whose pleasure the existence of any and every institution, and even of every individual, in the province "in his charge" depends; but now a real "state of war" has been established. Severity increased to an inordinate degree—in connection with famine relief! This is so truly Russian!

But greater stringency, intensified surveillance—all this demands increased expenditure on the bureaucratic machine, a fact of which the Minister has not lost sight; the uyezd marshals of the nobility, or other persons directing the Central Uyezd Food Board, will be granted "a special

sum" to cover their expenses, "concerning the approximate amount whereof Your Excellency will tender the appropriate application to me", adds the circular in its "special" jargon. In addition, further sums will be granted as follows: 1,000 rubles in a lump sum for uyezd council "office expenses"; from 1,000 to 1,500 rubles for expenses of the gubernia governor's offices. It is the offices that will have to carry on most of the activity, since famine relief will consist almost entirely of office work—how can the offices be left without the necessary funds? The offices come first, and what is left can go to the famine-stricken.

Mr. Sipyagin displays remarkable persistence and resourcefulness in devising measures for *reducing* famine relief. In the first place, he calls upon all governors to discuss which uyezds "have been affected by the harvest failure" (the final determination on this matter rests with the Ministry itself, since even governors cannot be trusted to avoid "exaggeration"!). Then follow the instructions indicating when uyezds *are not to be* regarded as affected areas: (1) if not more than one-third of its volosts* are affected; (2) if a grain shortage is usual in the uyezd and additional grain is purchased annually with subsidiary earnings; (3) if local resources are insufficient to grant relief. Here we have an example in miniature of the bureaucratic solution of the food problem—one measuring rod for all! What is the size of the population of one-third of the volosts? how seriously are they affected? have not the usual "earnings" been reduced this year by the serious industrial crisis?—all these are idle questions after the categorical "directions" of the Ministry. But the worst is still to come. The point at issue is—who is to be regarded as needy and how much relief is to be granted? Mr. Sipyagin recommends the following "approximate" computation which "has rarely been found to be greatly exaggerated". (What we fear most of all is exaggeration; we fear exaggerated hopes, we fear exaggerated loans! Famine, unemployment—all these are merely "exaggerations". Such is the idea that clearly emerges from all the ministerial reasoning.) In the first place, a test threshing is to be made to determine the "*average* yield per dessiatine in each village",

* See footnote to p. 36—*Tr.*

after which the area sown by each farmer is to be estimated. Why not also determine the size of the crop harvested by farmers of different means? The harvest of a poor peasant is smaller, and the term "average" is disadvantageous precisely to those in distress. Secondly, those who gather not less than forty-eight poods of grain per family per annum (counting twelve poods for three adults and six poods for two children) are not regarded as being in distress. This is the sort of calculation a tight-fisted kulak could be expected to make. In an ordinary year even the poorest peasant family of five or six persons consumes eighty, not forty-eight, poods of grain, whereas the middle (average) peasant family of five consumes 110 poods, as is known from surveys of peasant farming. Consequently, the tsarist government is cutting down *by one half* the amount of grain actually needed for food. Thirdly, says the circular, "this quantity [viz., forty-eight poods per family] is to be reduced by one half, in view of the fact that the worker element represents about fifty per cent of the population". The government stubbornly insists upon its standing rule that the working population must not be given relief because, as it argues, they can earn money. But the Minister has already ordered that the uyezds in which the population is normally engaged in auxiliary occupations shall not come under the heading of affected areas. Why, then, should he deprive the working population of relief for *a second time*? Everyone knows that, not only are there no opportunities for earning extra money this year, but that even the usual subsidiary earnings have declined owing to the crisis. The government itself has banished many thousands of unemployed workers from the cities to the rural areas. The experience of previous famines has shown that exclusion of the adult working population from relief leads only to the division of the existing inadequate relief between children and adults. No, the saying that "you cannot skin one ox twice" would be far too flattering for a Ministry of the Interior that in a twofold way excludes from the relief lists all who are able to work. Fourthly, this relief, totally inadequate and reduced by one half, is still further *cut down* by one-third, one-fifth, or one-tenth, "in proportion to the approximate number of well-to-do farmers having stocks left over from last year, or any other ma-

terial resources"! This is the third hide flayed from the same ox. What kind of "stock" can a peasant have if he has harvested not more than forty-eight poods of grain for his whole family? All other earnings have been taken into account twice; moreover, even the Russian peasant, with all the poverty to which government policy and exploitation by capitalists and landlords have reduced him, cannot live by bread alone. In addition to bread, he must spend money on fuel, clothes, and other food, as well as on repairs to his house. In ordinary years, as scientific inquiries into peasant farming inform us, even the poorest peasant spends *more than half* his income on requirements other than bread. If all these things are taken into account, it will be found that the Minister calculates the relief to be granted at *one-fourth or one-fifth* of what is actually needed. This is not fighting famine, it is fighting those who really want to help the famine-stricken.

The circular concludes with a regular crusade against private philanthropists. It has not infrequently been revealed, thunders Mr. Sipyagin, that certain philanthropists strive to arouse among the population "discontent with the present system and encourage the people to make totally unjustified demands on the government", that they conduct "anti-government agitation", etc. These accusations are absolutely *false*. It is well known that in 1891 leaflets were distributed by "peasant well-wishers"[99] in which the people were rightly told who their real enemy was; probably other attempts at agitation were made in connection with the famine. But there was not a single case of revolutionaries carrying on propaganda under cover of philanthropy. The vast majority of the philanthropists—this is an undoubted fact—were just philanthropists *and nothing more*. When, therefore, Mr. Sipyagin states that many of them were "persons whose political past is not irreproachable", we ask him, who among us now has an "irreproachable past"? Even "highly-placed persons" often paid tribute to the general democratic movement in their youth. Of course, we do not wish to say that to carry on agitation against the government in connection with the famine is impermissible or even undesirable. On the contrary, such agitation is always necessary, particularly in times of famine. We

merely wish to point out that Mr. Sipyagin is *straying into the realm of fiction* in trying to make it appear that his fears and anxieties are based on past experience. We wish to say that Mr. Sipyagin's statement is further proof of an old truism: the police government is afraid of even the slightest contact between the people and intellectuals that are in the least independent and honest, it fears every true and bold utterance addressed directly to the people, it suspects—and rightly so—that mere solicitude for the genuine (not imaginary) satisfaction of the people's needs is tantamount to agitation against the government; for the people see that private philanthropists sincerely desire to help them, while the tsarist government officials hamper and reduce relief, minimise the extent of the distress, impede the opening of food-kitchens, etc. Now the new circular demands that all contributions and appeals for contributions, as well as the opening of food-kitchens, "be under the control of the authorities"; it demands that all relief workers arriving in the affected areas "present themselves" to the governor, that they may choose assistants only with his consent, and that they submit to him a report of their activities! Those who desire to help the famine-stricken must submit to police officials and to the police system of curtailing relief and shamefully reducing relief rates. Whoever refuses to submit to this despicable procedure must not be allowed to carry on relief work—such is the essence of government policy. Mr. Sipyagin howls that "politically unreliable persons are eagerly taking advantage of the famine to pursue their criminal aims on the pretence of helping their neighbours", and this cry is taken up by the entire reactionary press (e.g., *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*). How horrible! To exploit the sufferings of the people for political purposes! In point of fact, what is horrible is precisely the fact that in Russia every kind of activity, *even* philanthropic work most remote from politics, inevitably brings people capable of independent thought into conflict with police tyranny and with measures of "suppression", "prohibition", "restriction", etc., etc. It is horrible that the government, under the cloak of high political considerations, pursues its Judas policy[100] of taking bread from the starving, cutting down relief to one-fifth, prohibiting everyone except police of-

ficials from approaching the starving! We repeat the call issued in *Iskra*: Organise a campaign of exposure against the police government's food policy; expose in the uncensored free press the outrages committed by local satraps, the whole avaricious tactic of curtailing relief, the miserliness and inadequacy of the relief, the despicable attempt to minimise the extent of the famine, and the shameful struggle against those who desire to help the famine-stricken! We advise all who have a grain of sincere sympathy for the people in their dire distress to take measures to bring to their knowledge the true sense and significance of the ministerial circular. It is only because of the unbounded ignorance of the people that *such* circulars do not immediately call forth an outburst of general indignation. Let the class-conscious workers who stand closest to the peasantry and to the less enlightened urban masses take the initiative in this work of exposing the government!

A REPLY TO THE ST. PETERSBURG COMMITTEE

Rabochaya Mysl, the organ of the St. Petersburg Committee (League of Struggle[101]), in its issue No. 12, published an article replying to a note in the first issue of *Iskra* on the split in the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad. Unfortunately, the reply assiduously *evades* the very essence of the controversy; such methods of discussion will never make the case clear. We have maintained and continue to maintain that *a split* has taken place in the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, that the Union *broke up* into two sections after the withdrawal from the conference in 1900 of a substantial minority, including the Emancipation of Labour group,[102] which had established the Union and formerly edited all its publications. Now that the split has occurred, neither of the two sections can occupy the place formerly occupied by the old Union as a whole. The St. Petersburg Committee *does not attempt* to refute this opinion when (for some unknown reason) it speaks only of Plekhanov and not of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation and when it lets its readers know only indirectly that the St. Petersburg League of Struggle apparently denies *the fact of the split* and continues to regard one of the sections of the late Union Abroad as the whole Union.

To what end engage in a polemic if there is no desire to examine the essence of the opponent's opinion and frankly to express one's own?

To continue. We have maintained and hold to our view that the principal cause (not pretext, but cause) of the split was a difference of opinion on principles, namely, a difference between revolutionary and opportunist Social-Democracy. For this reason alone, what has happened in

the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad cannot be regarded as anything but a split in the old Union Abroad. The question arises—how does the St. Petersburg Committee regard the matter? Will it dare to deny the existence of profound differences in principle between the two sections of the late Union Abroad? We do not know, because the St. Petersburg Committee contrived to write a "reply" which does not contain *a single word* about the main question. We again ask the St. Petersburg comrades—and not only the St. Petersburg comrades—does not a polemic that evades the heart of the matter threaten to degenerate into an unpleasant wrangle? Is it, in fact, worth while engaging in a polemic if there is no desire to examine the essentials of the question and to express one's opinion definitely and without reservations, or if it is regarded as premature to do so?

Iskra, No. 9, October 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

PARTY AFFAIRS ABROAD

The foreign branch of the *Iskra* organisation has united with the *Sotsial-Demokrat* revolutionary organisation abroad, and has formed with it a single organisation under the name of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad.[103] As will be seen from its published declaration, the new organisation proposes to issue a number of propaganda and agitational pamphlets. The League is the representative of *Iskra* abroad. Thus, the organisation of revolutionary Social-Democrats abroad, led by the Emancipation of Labour group, has finally merged with the organisation grouped round our paper. As before, the Emancipation of Labour group will participate directly in editing and managing our publications.

The unification of the Russian revolutionary Social-Democratic organisations abroad was accomplished 'after their attempt to combine with the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad (which issues *Rabocheye Dyelo*) had failed. Early in summer, a conference of representatives of the three organisations drafted an agreement. The basis of the agreement was provided by a number of resolutions on matters of principle, according to which the Union Abroad would put an end to all flirting with Economism and Bernsteinism, and recognise the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy. There was reason to hope that unity would be accomplished; for until then the only obstacle to a *rapprochement* was the vacillation of the Union Abroad and of its organ, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, with regard to questions of principle. These hopes were not justified, since the recently published No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo* contained editorial articles openly directed against the

resolutions that had been drawn up at the conference with the participation of the delegation of the Union Abroad. Apparently, the Union Abroad again swerved towards the Right Wing of our movement. In fact, at the conference of the three organisations, the Union Abroad proposed "amendments" to the above-mentioned resolutions, which clearly showed that it was reverting to its previous deviations. The other organisations felt obliged to leave the conference, and in fact did so. Apparently, our comrades of the Union Abroad are not yet sufficiently aware of the danger of the intermediary position their organisation occupies between revolutionary socialism and the opportunism that plays into the hands of the liberals. We hope that time and bitter experience will convince them of the error of their tactics. The effort observed throughout the Party, not only to work for the expansion of our movement, but also to raise its qualitative level, is the best guarantee that the much-desired unification of all our forces will be accomplished under the banner of revolutionary Social-Democracy, which our paper serves.

Iskra, No. 9, October 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

PENAL SERVITUDE REGULATIONS AND PENAL SERVITUDE SENTENCES

Once again "provisional regulations"!

This time, however, it is not disobedient students that are affected, but peasants who are guilty of starving.

On September 15, the "Provisional Regulations Governing the Participation of the Population in the Famine-Affected Areas in the Works Undertaken by Order of the Departments of Railways, Agriculture, and State Property" received the Imperial sanction and were immediately promulgated. When the Russian peasant becomes acquainted with these regulations (not from the newspapers, of course, but from personal experience), he will obtain further confirmation of the truth knocked into him during centuries of enslavement to the landlords and the officials: when the officials solemnly declare that the peasant "is to be allowed to participate" in any large or small affair, either in paying redemption money for the landlords' land, or in public works organised in connection with the famine, some new Egyptian plague must be expected.

In actuality, the entire contents of the Provisional Regulations of September 15 give the impression of being a new penal law, a supplementary regulation to the Penal Code. In the first place, the very organisation and management of the works are hemmed in with as much profound "caution" and as many bureaucratic complications as if rebels or convicts, rather than famine-stricken peasants, were being dealt with. One would imagine that the organisation of public works was the simplest thing in the world: all that is required is that the Zemstvos and other institutions be provided with funds and employ workers to

build roads, clear forests, etc. Under ordinary circumstances, this is how such works are carried out. Now, however, a new system is introduced. The rural superintendent suggests what kind of work is to be done, the governor gives his opinion, which is transmitted to the special "Conference on Food Affairs" in St. Petersburg, composed of representatives of various government departments, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Minister of the Interior. Moreover, the general management of this work is vested in the Minister, who may appoint special representatives to act on his behalf. The St. Petersburg Committee will even fix the maximum pay for the workers, which, no doubt, means that it will see to it that the peasant is not "corrupted" by excessive pay! Apparently, the object of the Provisional Regulations of September 15 is *to hinder* public works on a large scale, precisely as the Sipyagin circular of August 17 *hindered* relief to the famine-stricken.

But still more important and more vicious are the special regulations governing the engagement of peasants for public works.

If the work is carried on "away from their place of residence" (which naturally affects the overwhelming majority of cases), the workmen must form special artels *under the surveillance of the rural superintendent*, who is to approve the overseer responsible for maintaining order. Starving peasants must not dare to elect their overseer themselves, as workmen usually do. They are placed under the command of the rural superintendent armed with the birch! The names of the members of artels are to be entered in a special list, which *takes the place of* the legal *residence permit*.... Instead of individual passports, therefore, there will be lists of artel members. The purpose of the change? *To restrict* the peasant; for, with his own passport, he could make better arrangements for himself in the new place, or leave the work more easily upon being dissatisfied.

Further, "the maintenance of order *en route* and the delivery of consignments of workmen to the work managers are entrusted to officials specially appointed by the Ministry of the Interior". Free workmen are given travelling allowances; serfs are "shipped" in listed *consignments* and "delivered" to special officials. Are not the peasants right

in regarding "public" and state work as a new form of serfdom?

Indeed, the law of September 15 reduces the starving peasants to a position close to that of serfs, not only because it deprives them of the freedom of movement. The law gives the officials the right *to deduct part of their wages* to be sent to the workmen's families "if the gubernia authorities in the district where their families reside" consider it necessary. The money the workmen earn is to be disposed of without their consent. The peasant is stupid; he cannot look after his family himself. The authorities can do that far better. Who indeed has not heard how well they cared for the peasant families in the military settlements[104]?

One thing stands in the way, however. The peasants are no longer so submissive as they were at the time of the military settlements. They may demand ordinary passports and protest against deductions from their wages without their consent! Hence, it is necessary to resort to greater stringency, and so a special clause provides that "the preservation of order among the workers in the places of work is entrusted by the order of the Ministry of the Interior, to the local rural superintendents, the officers of the special corps of gendarmerie, police officials, or persons specially appointed for the purpose". Apparently, the government *a priori* regards the starving peasants as "rebels", and, in addition to the general surveillance conducted by the entire Russian police force, to which all Russian workers are subjected, it establishes an especially strict surveillance. It is decided *beforehand* to treat the peasants with an iron hand for having dared to "exaggerate" the famine and for putting forward (as Sipyagin expressed himself in his circular) "totally unjustified demands on the government".

To avoid having dealings with the courts in the event of any expression of discontent by the workmen, the Provisional Regulations empower the officials to place workmen under arrest *for a period not exceeding three days without trial* for disturbing the peace, for failing to work conscientiously, and for failing to obey orders. A free workman must be brought before a magistrate before whom he may defend himself, and against whose sentence he may appeal; but a starving peasant may be imprisoned without trial! The only

penalty that can be inflicted upon a free working man for refusing to work is dismissal, but according to the new law, "for persistent refusal to work" the peasant *may be sent back to his home under escort*, together with thieves and bandits!

The new Provisional Regulations are in fact penal servitude regulations for the famine-stricken, regulations that sentence them to hard labour and deprivation of rights for having dared to importune the officials with requests for aid. The government has not been satisfied with depriving the Zemstvos of jurisdiction over food distribution, with prohibiting private persons from organising food-kitchens without the permission of the police, and with ordering real needs to be reduced to one-fifth; it also declares the peasant to be without rights and orders him to be punished without trial. To the constant penal servitude of a starving existence and overwork is now added the threat of penal servitude on public works.

These are the measures taken by the government with respect to the peasants. As for the workers, the punishment meted out to them is more strikingly described in the "Indictment", which appeared in our last issue, in connection with the unrest at the Obukhov Works in May. *Iskra* dealt with these events in its June and July issues. The legal press was silent about the trial, probably remembering how even the most loyal *Novoye Vremya* "suffered" for attempting to write on this subject. A few lines appeared in the press to the effect that the trial had taken place at the end of September; subsequently one of the southern newspapers casually reported the verdict: two were sentenced *to penal servitude*, eight were acquitted, the rest were sentenced to imprisonment and detention in houses of correction for terms ranging from two to three and a half years.

Thus, in the article, "Another Massacre" (*Iskra*, No. 5),* we underestimated the vindictiveness of the Russian Government. We believed that in the struggle it had recourse to military reprisals as a last resort, fearing to appeal to the courts. It turns out, however, that it managed to combine one with the other: after assaulting the crowd and killing

* See present volume, pp. 25-30.—*Ed.*

three workers, thirty-seven men out of several thousand were seized and sentenced to Draconic punishments.

From the indictment we are able to judge to some extent the manner in which they were seized and tried. Anton Ivanovich Yermakov, Yephraim Stepanovich Dakhin, and Anton Ivanovich Gavrilov are charged with being the ringleaders. The indictment states that Yermakov had leaflets at his house (according to the evidence of Mikhailova, an assistant in a government liquor shop, *who*, *however*, *was not called upon to testify at the trial*), that he talked about the struggle for political liberty, and that on April 22 he went to Nevsky Prospekt with a red flag. Further it is stressed that Gavrilov, too, possessed and distributed leaflets calling for a demonstration on April 22. In regard to the accused Yakovleva, the charge is likewise that she participated in certain secret gatherings. It is clear, therefore, that the prosecutor sought to single out as ringleaders those whom the secret police suspected of being politically active workers. The political character of the case is apparent also from the fact that the crowd shouted, "We want liberty!" and from the connection with the First of May. It should be said in passing that it was the dismissal of twenty-six men for "losing time" on the First of May that set off the conflagration; but the prosecutor, of course, said not a word about the *illegality* of the dismissals!

The case is clear. Those suspected of being political enemies were made to stand trial. The secret police submitted the list. And the police "confirmed", of course, that these persons had been in the crowd, thrown stones, and stood out among the rest.

The trial was used as a shameful cloak for the second act of political vengeance (following the massacre). Politics were mentioned in order to make the case appear more serious, but no explanation of the political circumstances connected with the case was allowed. The men were tried as criminals, according to Article 263 of the Criminal Code, viz., on the charge of "overt rebellion against the authorities appointed by the government", rebellion, moreover, by armed persons (?). The charge was *a frame-up*. The police had instructed the judges to examine only one side of the case.

We wish to point out that according to Articles 263-265 of the Code, a sentence of penal servitude may be imposed for participation in a demonstration of *any* kind: for "overt rebellion for the purpose of preventing the execution of the orders and measures prescribed by the government", even if the "rebels" were not armed, and even if they did not commit any overt act of violence! Russian laws mete out sentences of penal servitude with a free hand. It is time we saw to it that every such trial *is converted* into a political trial by the accused themselves, so that the government shall not dare in the future to conceal its political vindictiveness by the farce of a criminal trial!

Yet what "progress", indeed, is to be observed in the administration of justice as compared, for example, with 1885! Then the weavers in the Morozov mills[105] were tried before a judge and a jury, full reports of the trial appeared in the press, and at the trial workers came forward as witnesses and exposed the outrageous conduct of the employer. But now—a court consisting of officials sitting with representatives of the social-estates without an opinion of their own, a trial behind closed doors, dumb silence on the part of the press, hand-picked witnesses: factory officials; watchmen; policemen, who have beaten the people; soldiers, who have shot down the workers. What a despicable farce!

If we compare the "progress" made in the reprisals against the workers between the years 1885 and 1901 with the "progress" made in the struggle against the famine-stricken between the years 1891 and 1901, we obtain some idea of the rapid spread of popular indignation in extent and in depth, and of the rising fury of the government, which is "clamping down" on both private philanthropists and the peasants, and is terrorising the workers with penal servitude. But threats of penal servitude will not terrify workers whose leaders showed no fear of death in open street battles with the myrmidons of the tsar. The memory of our heroic comrades murdered and tortured to death in prison will increase tenfold the strength of the new fighters and will rouse thousands to rally to their aid, and like the eighteen-year-old Marfa Yakovleva, they will openly say: "We stand by our brothers!" In addition to reprisals by the police and the military against participants in demonstra-

tions, the government intends to prosecute them for rebellion; we will retaliate by uniting our revolutionary forces and winning over to our side all who are oppressed by the tyranny of tsarism, and by systematically preparing for the uprising of the whole people!

Iskra, No. 10, November 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

REVIEW OF HOME AFFAIRS

Written in October 1901
First published in December 1901, in *Zarya*, No. 2-3
Signed: *T. Kh.*

Published according to the *Zarya* text

I. FAMINE[106]

Again famine! The last ten years have been marked, not only by the ruin of the peasantry, but by its veritable extinction, which has proceeded with such an astonishing rapidity that no war, however prolonged and bitter, has claimed such a host of victims. The most powerful forces of modern times are massed against the peasant: world capitalism, which is developing at an ever increasing rate, has created transoceanic competition, and has provided the small minority of farmers able to hold out in the desperate struggle for survival with the most improved methods and implements of production; and the militarist state, whose adventurous policy in its colonial possessions in the Far East and Central Asia involves enormous costs heavily burdening the masses of working people, the state which, in addition, is organising at the people's expense ever newer "suppression" and "restraints" to counteract the growing discontent and indignation of the masses.

Since famine has become a usual phenomenon in our country, it would be natural to expect that the government would try to fix and strengthen its usual food distribution policy. While in 1891-92 the government was caught unawares and was at first thrown into consternation, now, however, it is rich in experience and knows precisely where (and how) to proceed. In its July issue (No. 6), *Iskra* wrote: "At this moment a black cloud of people's distress is threatening our country and the government is once again making preparations for the exercise of its disgraceful function of brute violence to deprive the starving people of bread and punish everyone who, contrary to government policy, renders aid to the hungry."

FROM MARX TO MAO
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

The government's preparations were swift and determined. The spirit in which they were made is illustrated by the Elizavetgrad affair. Prince Obolensky, Governor of Kherson Gubernia, immediately declared war upon all who dared to write or speak about the famine in Elizavetgrad, appeal for public aid for the famine-stricken, form private groups, and invite private persons to organise this aid. The Zemstvo doctors wrote to the newspapers stating that famine was raging in the uyezd, that the people were disease-stricken and were dying, and that the "bread" they were eating was something unbelievable, not deserving to be called bread. The governor launched a polemic against the doctors and published official denials. Anyone at all acquainted with the general conditions under which our press has to work, anyone who will take the trouble to recall the severe persecution to which even moderate organs and incomparably more moderate authors have been subjected recently, will understand the significance of this "polemic" between the head of a gubernia and mere Zemstvo doctors who are not even in government service. It was simply an act of gagging them, an outright declaration without any ceremony that the government would not tolerate the truth about the famine. But what is a mere declaration? Whatever may be said of others, the Russian Government certainly cannot be reproached with restricting itself to mere declarations when the opportunity exists to "apply power". And Prince Obolensky hastened to apply power; he appeared personally on the scene of war—war upon the famine-stricken and upon those who, though not on the pay roll of any department, desired to render *real* aid to the famine-stricken; and he *prohibited* a number of private persons (including Madame Uspenskaya), who had come to the famine-stricken area, *from opening food-kitchens*. Like Julius Caesar, Prince Obolensky came, saw, and conquered; and the telegraph promptly informed the entire Russian reading public of his victory. One thing is perplexing—that this victory, this brazen challenge to all Russians who have retained at least a shred of decency, a grain of civic courage, met with no opposition whatever from those who, one may say, were most interested in the matter. Very many persons in Kherson Gubernia doubtless knew—and know now—the reason for the silence about the famine and

the fight against famine relief; but no one has published a single statement on this instructive case, or the relevant documents, or even a simple appeal to protest against the monstrous prohibition of food-kitchens. When the government carries out its threat to dismiss all who "lost time" on the First of May, the workers declare a strike; but the intelligentsia keeps silent when intellectuals are prohibited ... from rendering aid to the famine-stricken.

Encouraged, as it were, by success in the first skirmish with the "sowers of discord" who dare to aid the famine-stricken, the government soon launched an attack all along the line. Prince Obolensky's valiant exploit was elevated to a guiding principle, into a law, which would henceforth regulate the relations between all administrators and all persons accessory to the distribution of food (the word "accessory", strictly speaking, is a term in criminal law peculiar to the Penal Code; but as we have seen and shall see below, at the present time rendering aid to the famine-stricken without authority is regarded as a crime). Such a law was soon enacted—this time in the simplified form of "a circular from the Minister of the Interior to all governors of gubernias affected by the harvest failure of 1901" (August 17, 1901, No. 20).

It may be assumed that this circular will serve for many years to come as a souvenir of the monumental heights to which police fear rises in the face of the people's distress, a fear of closer ties between the famine-stricken people and the "intellectuals" who desire to help them; at the same time, it is a fear that reveals a firm intention to suppress all "clamour" about the famine and to restrict relief to the most insignificant scope. One can only regret that the immoderate length of the circular and the ponderous official style in which it is written will hinder the public at large from becoming acquainted with its contents.

It will be remembered that the law of June 12, 1900, took the management of food affairs out of the hands of the Zemstvos and transferred it to the rural superintendents and uyezd congresses. What, it seemed, could be more reliable? The elective principle was eliminated; persons in any way independent of the authorities would have no jurisdiction and consequently would make no more noise. But after Prince Obolensky's campaign, all this appeared to be

inadequate. The whole business must be more strictly subordinated to the Ministry and to the officials directly carrying out its orders; the slightest possibility of exaggeration must be definitely removed. For that reason, the question as to which uyezds are "affected by the harvest failure" is from now on *to be decided* exclusively by the Ministry,* which apparently is to serve as the headquarters for the general staff for conducting military operations against the famine-stricken. Through the medium of the governors, these headquarters will direct the activities of the individuals (principally the uyezd marshals of the nobility) in whose hands the Central Uyezd Food Board is concentrated. The initiator of military operations against the famine-stricken, Prince Obolensky, was obliged to travel personally to the district in order to prohibit, restrain, and curtail. Now, everything is "regulated", and all that is necessary is an exchange of telegrams (possible, thanks to the grant of a thousand rubles per uyezd for office expenses) between the Central Uyezd Board and the St. Petersburg Central Board for the necessary "orders" to be given. Turgenev's civilised landlord not only kept away from the stables, but even gave orders in subdued tones to a liveried footman in white gloves: "See that Fyodor gets it...."[107] So it will be here now; "orders" will be given, "without clamour", nicely and quietly, to restrain the immoderate appetites of the starving population.

The fact that Mr. Sipyagin is convinced that the appetite of the starving peasant is immoderate becomes evident,

* The manner in which the Ministry decides this question can be judged from the example of Perm Gubernia. According to the latest press reports, this gubernia is still regarded as having "a good harvest", notwithstanding the fact that (according to the report of the extraordinary gubernia Zemstvo congress held on October 10) the harvest this year *is even worse* than the extremely poor harvest of 1898. The yield this year represents only 58 per cent of the average, and in the Shadrinsk and Irbit uyezds is only 36 per cent and 34 per cent respectively. In 1898 the government granted the gubernia (in addition to local grants) 1,500,000 poods of grain and over 250,000 rubles in money. Now, however, the Zemstvos have no funds, they are restricted in their powers, the harvest is far worse than that of 1898, the price of grain began to rise *as from July 1*, the peasants *have begun selling their cattle*—and the government persists in declaring that the gubernia has "a good harvest"!!

not only from the persistent warnings in the circular against "exaggeration", but from the new regulations it lays down which remove all possibility of exaggeration. Do not be in a hurry to draw up the lists of the distressed, for this will arouse among the population "exaggerated hopes", the Minister states explicitly, and orders that the lists be drawn up only immediately before grain is to be distributed. Furthermore, the circular regards it as superfluous to determine when an uyezd *should be* considered a distressed area; but it distinctly states when an uyezd *should not be* considered a distressed area (e.g., when not more than one-third of the volosts are affected, when usual auxiliary employment is available, etc.). Finally, in regard to the rate of relief to be granted to the famine-stricken, the Minister introduces regulations which show with extreme clarity that the government desires *at all costs* to cut down these grants to the very minimum, to mere doles that do nothing to secure the population against starvation. In point of fact, the quota is forty-eight poods of grain per family (calculated on the average yield of the harvest in each village), and those who possess that amount or more are not in need. How this figure was arrived at, no one knows. All that is known is that in *non*-famine years even the poorest peasant consumes twice as much grain (cf. Zemstvo Statistical Investigation of Peasants' Budgets). Consequently, undernourishment is considered a normal state according to the Minister's prescript. But even this quota is reduced, first by half, in order to prevent the working elements, which represent about fifty per cent of the population, from obtaining loans, *and then* by one-third, one-fifth, and one-tenth, "in proportion to the approximate number of well-to-do farmers having stocks left over from last year, or any other [literally so: "or any other"!] material resources". One can judge from this what an insignificant fraction of the amount of grain actually required by the population will be represented by the loan the government intends to grant. And, as if rejoicing in his insolence, Mr. Sipyagin, in explaining this incredible system of curtailing relief, declares that such an approximate computation "has rarely been found to be greatly exaggerated". Comment is superfluous.

Whenever official declarations of the Russian Government contain something more than bare instructions and make at least some attempt to explain them, they almost invariably—it is a kind of law more stable than the majority of our laws—advance two principal motives or rather two principal types of motives. On the one hand, we invariably find a number of general phrases, written in pompous style, about official solicitude and a desire to meet the requirements of the time and the wishes of public opinion. Thus, reference is made to the "important task of averting a food shortage among the rural population", to the "moral responsibility for the welfare of the local population", etc. It goes without saying that these commonplaces signify nothing and impose no definite obligation; but they are as alike as two peas to the immortal sermons delivered by the immortal Judas Golovlyov to the peasants he had robbed. Parenthetically it should be said, these commonplaces are constantly exploited (sometimes out of simple-mindedness and sometimes as a "duty") by the censored liberal press whereby to demonstrate that the government shares its point of view.

But if the other, less general and less obviously hollow motives of the government's orders are examined more closly, concrete statements will always be found *which repeat in toto* the established arguments of the most reactionary organs of our press (e.g., *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*). We are of the opinion that it would be well worth while (and quite possible even for those who work legally) to follow up and record every case of this solidarity between the government and *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*. In the circular under discussion, for example, we find a repetition of the vile accusations levelled by the terribly "wild landlords" to the effect that the premature compilation of lists of the distressed stimulates "efforts among certain well-to-do householders to give their farms an appearance of poverty by selling their supplies, reserves, and implements". The Minister states that this "has been proved by experience in the course of previous food campaigns". Consequently? Consequently, the Minister acquires his political experience from the lessons taught him by the most hidebound serf-owners, who raised such a clamour in previous famine years, who are clamouring now

about the deceit of the peasants, and who are so indignant over the "noise" that is being raised about the epidemic of famine typhus.

It was from these serf-owners also that Mr. Sipyagin learned to talk about demoralisation. "It is extremely important," he writes, "for ... the local institutions ... to help economise the allocated funds and, above all [*sic*!!], prevent the unjustified grants of government relief to persons who are materially secure, because of the harmful and demoralising effect of such grants." This shameless instruction to help economise the funds is sealed by the following advice based on a point of principle: "... wide distribution of food grants to families that can dispense with them [that can subsist on twenty-four poods of grain a year per family?], apart from being an unproductive [!] expenditure of state funds, will be no less harmful from the standpoint of the benefits and requirements of the state than if those really in distress were left without proper aid." In bygone times, monarchs would in their sentimental moments say. "It is better to acquit ten criminals than to convict one innocent man"; but nowadays the right arm of the tsar declares: It is as harmful to give relief to families that can manage on twenty-four poods of grain a year as to leave families "really" in need without relief. What a pity that this magnificently candid "point of view" regarding "the benefits and requirements of the state" is obscured from the eyes of the general public by a lengthy and dull circular! One hope is left: perhaps the Social-Democratic press and Social-Democratic oral agitation will enable the people to become more closely acquainted with the contents of the ministerial circular.

* * *

But the circular directs an especially vigorous "attack" upon private philanthropists. Everything indicates that the administrators, who are waging war against the famine-stricken, consider the most important "enemy" position to be private relief circles, private food-kitchens, etc. With laudable frankness Mr. Sipyagin explains why private philanthropy has for a long time now given the Ministry of the Interior sleepless nights. "Beginning with the poor harvest

of 1891 and 1892, and during all subsequent calamities of a similar kind," says the circular, "it has not infrequently been found that certain philanthropists, while rendering material aid to the inhabitants of the affected districts, strive to rouse among them discontent with the present system and encourage the people to make totally unjustified demands on the government. At the same time, the failure to meet the distress to the full, and the inevitable ailments and economic disorders that arise therefrom, create an extremely favourable soil for anti-government agitation; politically unreliable persons freely take advantage of this and pursue their criminal aims under the cloak of helping their neighbour. Usually, as soon as the first news of a serious harvest failure is received, persons with a political past that is not irreproachable pour into the affected districts from all directions, strive to make contact with representatives of charitable organisations and institutions from the capital, who, through ignorance, engage those persons as local helpers and in this way create serious difficulties inimical to the interests of good order and administration."

However, the Russian Government is becoming hard pressed in the land of Russia. Time was when only the student youth was considered as a stratum calling for special security measures. The students were subjected to the strictest surveillance, contact with them on the part of persons whose political past is not irreproachable was regarded as a great offence, every study circle and society, even if it pursued purely philanthropic aims, was suspected of anti-government aims, etc. In those times—not far in the past—there was no other *stratum*, to say nothing of a social class, that in the eyes of the government, represented "an extremely favourable soil for anti-government agitation". But since the middle nineties, one meets in official government communications mention of another, immeasurably more numerous, social class that calls for special security meaures—the factory workers. The growth of the labour movement compelled the government to establish a full-fledged system of institutions to maintain surveillance over this new stormy element. Among the districts prohibited as places of residence for politically doubtful persons were included factory centres and settlements, uyezds and whole

gubernias, in addition to the capitals and university cities.* Two-thirds of European Russia came under special protection against unreliable elements, while the remaining third is becoming so crowded with "persons whose political past is not irreproachable" that even the remotest province is becoming restless.** It now appears that according to the authoritative judgement of so competent a person as the Minister of the Interior even the remotest *village* represents "favourable soil" for anti-government agitation, insofar as there occur in it cases of not fully relieved distress, of sickness, and of economic disorder. And are there many Russian villages in which such "cases" are not constant? And should not we Russian Social-Democrats immediately take advantage of Mr. Sipyagin's instructive reference to "favourable" soil? On the one hand, precisely at this moment, the rural districts are displaying interest in the rumours which at times have managed to penetrate to them in one way or another about the skirmishes that occurred between the government's gendarmes and the urban proletariat and the young intelligentsia in February and March. On the other hand, do not phrases like the peasant's "totally unjustified demands", etc., provide a sufficiently wide programme for the most extensive, all-round agitation?

We must take advantage of Mr. Sipyagin's useful information and laugh at his simplicity. It is indeed the sheerest naïveté to imagine that by placing private charity under the supervision and control of the governor he can hinder the spread of the influence of "unreliable" persons in the rural districts. Genuine philanthropists have never pursued political aims, so that the new measures of prohibition and restriction will mostly affect the very persons who are least dangerous to the government. Those, however, who desire to

---

* See, for instance, the secret circular published in *Iskra*, No. 6, on the people banished from St. Petersburg, mostly writers, many of whom had never been involved in political affairs of any kind, let alone "labour" affairs. Nevertheless, they have been denied domicile, not only in university cities, but also in "factory localities", while for some the prohibition relates *only* to factory localities.

** See, for example, the correspondence in *Iskra*, Nos. 6 and 7, in which it is reported that public unrest and aid to the peasants in despite of the government had penetrated even into such God-guarded cities as Penza, Simferopol, Kursk, etc.

open the eyes of the peasants to the real significance of these measures, and to the government's attitude towards the famine, will not consider it necessary to establish contact with representatives of the Red Cross or present themselves to the governors. Thus, when it was found that the factory environment represented "favourable soil", those who desired to establish contact with that environment did not visit the factory managers for information about factory conditions or present themselves to the factory inspectors for permission to organise meetings with the workers. We are fully aware, of course, that it is extremely difficult to carry on political agitation among the peasantry, the more so since it is impossible and irrational to withdraw revolutionary forces from the cities for that purpose. Yet we must not lose sight of the fact that the government's heroic deeds, such as restricting private charity, remove a good half of these difficulties and do half our work for us.

* * *

We shall not dwell on the same Minister's circular calling for stricter surveillance over charitable concerts, theatrical performances, etc.; for that is a "mere bagatelle", as compared with the circular we have just examined (cf. article "Fresh Obstacles", *Iskra*, No. 9).

We will endeavour to establish the relation that exists now between the government relief for the population, fixed and distributed according to the new regulations, and the actual extent of the distress. True, our information on this point is exceedingly scanty. The press now is thoroughly muzzled, the voices of private organisers of food-kitchens have been silenced simultaneously with the "prohibition" of their activities, and the only sources of information available to the Russian public, now struck dumb by the new stringent measures, are the official police reports on the favourable progress of the food campaign, the articles written in the same spirit in *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, sometimes the interviews of an idle reporter with this or that Jack-in-office pompously expatiating on "His Excellency's singleness of mind and His Excellency's singleness of authority, etc.".[108] Thus, *Novoye Vremya*, No. 9195,

reports that the Governor of Saratov, A. P. Engelhardt (formerly Governor of Archangel), gave an interview to a representative of a local newspaper, in the course of which he said that he had personally convened in that locality a conference of marshals of the nobility, of representatives of the Zemstvo Boards, of the rural superintendents, and of representatives of the Red Cross, at which he had "distributed tasks".

"Scurvy, in the form I have seen it in Archangel Gubernia, is not to be found here [said A. P. Engelhardt]. In Archangel, one cannot approach within five paces of a patient; there the disease is really a form of 'rot'. Here we see mostly the effects of severe anaemia, which results from the awful conditions of domestic life. Almost the only symptoms of scurvy observed here are white lips and white gums.... With proper nutrition such patients recover within a week. Food is now being distributed. About one thousand rations are being distributed daily, although not more than four hundred cases of acute distress have been registered.

"Besides scurvy, only three cases of typhus have been reported in the whole district. We may hope that things will not get worse, for everywhere public works have been organised and the population is assured of employment."

What prosperity! In the whole of Khvalynsk Uyezd (to which the Jack-in-office refers) there are only four hundred persons in acute distress (in all probability the rest, in Mr. Sipyagin's and Mr. Engelhardt's opinion, "can manage well" on twenty-four poods of grain per family per annum!), the population is provided for, and the sick recover within a week. After this, how can we not believe *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* when, in a special leading article (in No. 258), it informs us that "according to the latest reports, in twelve gubernias affected by the harvest failure *the administration is very actively organising relief*. Many uyezds have already been investigated for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is a shortage of food; *uyezd managers* of food-affairs *have been appointed*, etc. Apparently, official representatives of the government are doing everything possible to render timely and adequate aid."

"... very actively organising", and ... "not more than four hundred cases of acute distress have been registered"....

In Khvalynsk Uyezd there are 165,000 rural inhabitants, and one thousand rations are being distributed. The yield of rye in the whole of the south-eastern area (including Saratov Gubernia) this year was 34 per cent below average. Of the total area of peasant lands planted to crops in Saratov Gubernia (1,500,000 dessiatines), 15 per cent suffered a complete failure of the harvest (according to the report of the gubernia Zemstvo Board) and 75 per cent suffered a poor harvest, while Khvalynsk and Kamyshin uyezds are the two worst affected uyezds in the gubernia. Consequently, the total amount of grain gathered in by the peasants in Khvalynsk Uyezd is at least 30 per cent below average. Let us assume that half of this shortage affects the well-to-do peasantry, which is not yet reduced thereby to starvation (a very risky assumption, since the well-to-do peasant possesses better land and cultivates it better, so that he always suffers less from a bad harvest than do the poor peasants). But even on this assumption, the number of the starving must be something like 15 per cent, or about 25,000. Yet we are offered the consolation that scurvy in Khvalynsk is not nearly so bad as it is in Archangel, that there were only three cases of typhus (if only they would lie more cleverly!), and that one thousand rations are being distributed (the size of which is in all probability determined by Sipyagin's system of combating exaggerations).

With respect to the "subsidiary earnings", which, to avoid exaggeration, Mr. Sipyagin *thrice* takes into account in his circular (once, when he orders that uyezds in which subsidiary earnings are usual shall not be regarded as affected areas; a second time when he orders that the forty-eight poods scale be reduced by half because 50 per cent of the working population "must" be earning wages; and a third time when he orders this scale to be further reduced by amounts ranging from one-third to one-tenth according to local conditions)—with respect to these subsidiary earnings, not only agricultural but even non-agricultural earnings have diminished in Saratov Gubernia. "The harvest failure," we read in the above-mentioned Zemstvo Board report, "has also affected the handicraftsmen, due to the drop in the sales of their manufactures. Owing to these circumstances, *a crisis is observed* in the uyezds in which handicrafts are most highly

developed." Among these is Kamyshin Uyezd, which has suffered most, and in which many thousands of poor people are engaged in weaving the celebrated local striped calico (*sarpinka*). Even in normal years conditions in the handicraft industry of this remote rural district were woeful; six- and seven-year-old children, for example, were employed at a wage of seven or eight kopeks a day. We can picture to ourselves what conditions are like there in a year of severe harvest failure and acute crisis in the handicraft industry.

In Saratov Gubernia (and in all affected gubernias, of course), the poor grain harvest is accompanied also by a shortage of fodder. The past few months (i.e., in the second half of the summer!) have seen the spread of various cattle diseases and an increase in cattle mortality. "According to a report of the veterinary surgeon in Khvalynsk Uyezd [we quote from the newspaper that contained the above-mentioned Zemstvo Board report], an examination of the contents of the stomachs of the dead cattle revealed nothing but earth."

The "Report of the Zemstvo Department of the Ministry of the Interior" on the progress of the food campaign contained, incidentally, the statement that of the uyezds recognised as affected areas "in Khvalynsk alone a number of cases of epidemic scurvy have been discovered in two villages since July. The local medical staff is exerting all its efforts to stop the epidemic and two Red Cross detachments have been sent to the district to assist the local forces. According to the report of the governor [the very A. P. Engelhardt, whose acquaintance we have made], their efforts are meeting with considerable success; according to reports received by the Ministry up to September 12, in none of the other affected uyezds were there any cases of acute distress left without relief, and no development of disease as a consequence of inadequate nutrition is observed."

To show what confidence may be placed in the statement that no cases of *acute* distress were left unrelieved (were there cases of *chronic* distress?) and that the development of disease is not observed, we shall confine ourselves to comparing data on two other gubernias.

In Ufa Gubernia, Menzelinsk and Belebeyev uyezds were declared to be affected areas, and the Zemstvo Depart-

ment of the Ministry of the Interior reports that "according to the governor's statement" the amount of the government grant required "specifically for food" is 800,000 poods. However, a special meeting of the Ufa Gubernia Zemstvo Assembly held on August 27 to discuss the question of rendering relief to the famine-stricken estimated food requirements of those uyezds at 2,200,000 poods of grain, 1,000,000 poods for the other uyezds, not including grants of seed-grain (3,200,000 poods for the entire gubernia) and cattle fodder (600,000 poods). Consequently, the Ministry fixed the grant at *one-fourth* the amount fixed by the Zemstvo.

Another instance. In Vyatka Gubernia none of the uyezds was declared affected areas at the time when the Zemstvo department issued its report; nevertheless, the food grant was fixed by that body at 782,000 poods. This is the figure which, by press reports, was fixed by the Vyatka Gubernia Food Department at its meeting of August 28 (in accordance with the decisions of the Uyezd Assemblies held between August 18 and 25). *Approximately on August 12, these very* Assemblies had fixed a different amount for the grant, viz., 1,100,000 poods for food and 1,400,000 poods for seed. Why this difference? What happened between August 12 and 28? The answer is, Sipyagin's circular of August 17 on fighting the famine-stricken had been published. Consequently, the circular had an immediate effect, and the trifling amount of 230,000 poods of grain was struck out of the estimate, drawn up, mark you, by the Uyezd Assemblies, i.e., by the very institutions which, by the law of June 12, 1900, were established in place of the unreliable Zemstvos, institutions composed of officials generally and of rural superintendents in particular.... Shall we really live to see the day when even the rural superintendents will be accused of liberalism? Perhaps we shall. Recently we read in *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* the following reprimand inflicted on a certain Mr. Om., who, in *Priazovsky Krai*[109] had dared to propose that the newspapers publish the minutes of the meetings of the Gubernia Boards for Urban Affairs (since press representatives were not permitted to attend them):

"The purpose is all too transparent: *the Russian civil servant frequently suffers from a fear of appearing illiberal*, and publicity may compel him, at times even against his

own conscience, to support some fantastically liberal scheme proposed by the city or the Zemstvo. By no means an altogether false calculation."

Should not the Vyatka rural superintendents, who (apparently out of fear of appearing illiberal) have revealed such unpardonable frivolity in "exaggerating" the food crisis, be placed under special surveillance?*

Incidentally, if the wise Russian Government had not withdrawn from it jurisdiction over food affairs, the "fantastically liberal" Vyatka Zemstvo would have gone even further in its estimate of the distress. At all events, the Special Gubernia Conference, held from August 30 to September 2, declared the amount of grain harvested to be 17 per cent, and the amount of cattle fodder 15 per cent, below

*Another instance of the manner in which the Governor of Vyatka combats exaggerations:

"In an 'announcement' sent out to the Volost Boards the Governor of Vyatka records a very cautious attitude on the part of the peasants towards food grants from the government and the Zemstvo. 'During my tour of the gubernia,' writes Mr. Klingenberg, 'I saw for myself with what deliberation and caution the peasants act in the present circumstances. They hesitate to contract debts except under pressure of extreme necessity and are firmly resolved to wait patiently for God's help in the year to come, striving by their own efforts to extricate themselves from their difficult condition.' Hence, the Governor of Vyatka expresses the conviction that 'the peaceful and sensible inhabitants of Vyatka Gubernia will not allow themselves to be disturbed by rumours about free government and Zemstvo aid and about the annulment of debts and arrears, or by exaggerated reports of the failure of the harvest'. The Governor deems it his duty to warn the peasants that 'if a check of the grants shows that householders, even with no reserve stocks, have gathered in sufficient corn this year to feed themselves and their families and to sow their fields, but have sold their corn and utilised the proceeds for other purposes, such householders must not count on obtaining a loan. According to the new law, the loans granted will be recoverable, not on the basis of collective liability,[110] but in accordance with the regulations governing the collection of taxes. Consequently, every householder who applies for and receives a loan must bear in mind that he and he alone will be responsible for repayment, that no one will help him, that repayment will be strictly enforced, and that if he falls into arrears all his movable property may be sold and his real estate confiscated.'"

We can well imagine how the local volost authorities treat starving peasants who have fallen into arrears and demand a loan after such a statement by the Governor!

subsistence needs. The amount absolutely essential is 105,000,000 poods (the amount harvested in an ordinary year being 134,000,000; in this year, 84,000,000 poods). There is, therefore, a shortage of *21 million poods*. "The total number of volosts in the gubernia suffering from a shortage of grain this year is 158 out of 310. The population of these volosts numbers 1,566,000 persons of both sexes." Yes, undoubtedly, "the administration is very actively organising"—minimising the real extent of the distress and reducing the work of relieving the starving to a kind of acrobatics of cheese-paring philanthropy.

In fact, the term "acrobats of philanthropy" would be too flattering a name for the administrators who have rallied under the banner of the Sipyagin circular. What they have in common with acrobats of philanthropy is the paltry nature of the relief they render and their attempts to blow it up into something bigger than it is. But the acrobats of philanthropy at worst regard the people upon whom they bestow their charity as playthings that pleasantly tickle their vanity, whereas the Sipyagin administrators regard their beneficiaries as enemies, as people that make illegal demands ("totally unjustified demands on the government") and that must therefore be held in restraint. This point of view was expressed most strikingly in the remarkable Provisional Regulations, which were accorded royal sanction on September 15, 1901.

These regulations represent in the full sense a law, which consists of twenty articles and contains so much that is remarkable that we would not hesitate to designate it as one of the most important legislative acts of the early twentieth century. To begin with the title: "Provisional Regulations Governing the *Participation* of the Population in the Famine-Affected Areas in the Works Undertaken by Order of the Departments of Railways, Agriculture, and State Property." Evidently these works are so chock-full of benefits that to be allowed to "participate" in them must be regarded as a special act of grace, otherwise the first clause of the new law would not state: "Rural inhabitants of localities affected by the famine *shall be allowed to participate* in the carrying out of the works projects", etc.

But the law provides for these "privileges" only in its second half, while in the first it deals with the *organisation* of the whole business. The competent authorities "determine the most suitable works projects to be undertaken" (Article 2), which "shall be carried out in conformity with the provision in the law" (Article 3, which, like the chapter headings in some Dickensian novel, may be entitled: "The clause of the new law, which tells of the necessity of acting in accordance with the old law"). The public works are to be launched on budget estimates, or on special credits, and the general supervision of the organisation of these works is vested in the Minister of the Interior, who may appoint officials with special powers and who arranges a special "Conference on Food Affairs" with representatives of various ministries participating under the chairmanship of the Deputy Minister. The functions of this body include: (a) granting permission for departures from the existing regulations; (b) discussing proposals for the allocation of funds; (c) "fixing the maximum remuneration to be paid to workmen, as well as establishing the other conditions under which the population may be permitted to participate in the aforesaid works; (d) distributing the work crews to the locations of the projects; and, (e) organising the transport of the crews to the works locations". The decisions of the Conference must be sanctioned by the Minister of the Interior, as well as, "in corresponding cases", by the ministers of other departments. The function of determining the works projects, and of ascertaining the number of residents in need of work, is vested in the rural superintendents, who must report the information to the governors, who, in turn, communicate the information with their opinions to the Ministry of the Interior and "on its instructions arrange, through the rural superintendents, for the dispatch of workers to the works locations...."

Ugh! At last we have mastered the "organisation" of this new business! The question now arises how much lubrication will be required to set all the wheels of this ponderous, purely Russian administrative monster in motion. Try to imagine this thing concretely. Only the rural superintendent comes in direct contact with the famine-stricken. He therefore must take the initiative. He sends a communi-

ation—to whom? To the governor, says an article of the Provisional Regulations of September 15. But in accordance with the circular of August 17, a special Central Uyezd Food Board has been established, whose function is "to concentrate the management of *all* food affairs in the uyezd in the hands of a single official" (under the circular of August 17 the uyezd marshal of the nobility should preferably be appointed to that post). A "dispute" arises, which, of course, is quickly settled on the basis of the remarkably clear and simple "principles" outlined in the six points of Article 175 of the General Gubernia Regulations which prescribes "the order for settling disputes ... between public departments and officials". In the end the document finds its way somehow into the office of the governor, where someone undertakes to draft an "opinion". Following which, everything goes to St. Petersburg, there to be examined by the special Conference. But the representative of the Ministry of Railways to the Conference is unable to decide on the expediency of such a public works project as road repairs in Buguruslan Uyezd, and so another document travels from St. Petersburg to the gubernia and back again. When, finally, the expediency of the works, etc., etc., is decided on in principle, the Conference in St. Petersburg will then set about "distributing the work crews" between Buzuluk and Buguruslan uyezds.

How shall this unwieldy machine be explained? By the novelty of the thing? Not at all. Before the Provisional Regulations of September 15 were introduced, public works could be organised ever so much more simply "on the basis of the existing laws", and the circular of August 17, which refers to the public works organised by the Zemstvos, the Guardians of the poor, and the gubernia authorities, makes no reference to the necessity for any kind of special organisation. You see, therefore, that the government's "food campaign" consists in the fact that the St. Petersburg departments spend a whole month (from August 17 to September 15) thinking and thinking, and finally produce a hopelessly tangled skein of red tape. We may be sure, however, that the St. Petersburg Conference stands in no danger of making exaggerations, as do the local bureaucrats who "fear to appear illiberal"....

But the prize exhibit of the new Provisional Regulations is the prescript concerning the "rural inhabitants" hired for the works projects. When work is to be carried out "away from their place of residence", the workers must first of all form themselves into a special artel, "under the supervision of the rural superintendent", who endorses the appointment of the artel overseer responsible for maintaining order; secondly, the names of the workmen joining such an artel must be entered in a special list which "is to serve as a *substitute* for the ordinary legally established residence permits of the workmen thereon listed during their transfer to, and stay at, their place of work, and which must remain in the possession of the official accompanying the workmen on their journey, or, in his absence, in the possession of the artel overseer, and on arrival at the destination must be placed in charge of the works manager".

Why is it necessary to substitute a special list for the ordinary passports, which every peasant who desires to travel has a right to receive gratis? This is clearly a restriction imposed upon the workmen, since, if they remained in possession of their passports, they would have more freedom in selecting a room, in spending their free time, or in changing one job for another, if they found it more remunerative or convenient to do so. We shall see below that this was done deliberately, not only out of love for red tape, but specifically in order to impose restrictions upon the workmen and make their conditions approximate those of gangs of transported serfs accompanied by an "inventory" of a kind.[111] It appears that the function of "maintaining order on the journey, and the delivery [sic!] of the work crew to the public works manager is vested in an official commissioned for the purpose by the Ministry of the Interior". The farther into it we get, the more complicated it becomes. The substitution of lists for passports leads to the substitution of freedom of movement by—"consignment of work crews". What have we here? Gangs of convicts being transported to penal servitude? Have all the laws permitting the peasant in possession of a passport to travel wherever and however he pleases been repealed—perhaps as a punishment for "exaggerating" the famine? Is conveyance at government expense a sufficient reason for depriving a citizen of his rights?

To continue. It appears that the persons in charge of distributing the workmen and of paying their wages, as well as the other officials of the department supervising the execution of the works projects, "on the instructions of the gubernia authorities in the district where the families of the workmen reside, dock the wages earned, wherever possible, and send the deducted amount to their home locations for the maintenance of the workmen's families". A further deprivation of rights. How dare the officials deduct part of the wages earned by the workers? How dare they interfere in the workmen's family affairs and decide for them, as if they were serfs, whom they are to maintain and how much they are to contribute to that end? Would workmen permit their wages to be docked without their consent? Apparently, this question entered the heads of those who drafted the new "penal servitude regulations", because the clause immediately following the one quoted above says: "The preservation of order among the workmen in the works locations is entrusted, by decision of the Minister of the Interior, to the local rural superintendents, to the officers of the special corps of gendarmerie, to the police officials, or to persons specially appointed for that purpose." It is clear that the peasants are *to be punished* by deprivation of their rights for "exaggerating" the famine and for their "totally unjustified demands on the government"! It is not enough that the ordinary police, the factory police, and the secret police keep the Russian workers in general under surveillance; these regulations prescribe the establishment of a *special* surveillance. One might think the government has completely lost its head out of fear of these work crews of hungry peasants, freighted, transported, and delivered with a thousand precautions.

We read further: "Workers guilty of disturbing the public peace and quiet, deliberately shirking their work, or refusing to carry out the lawful demands of the works managers or those appointed for the purpose of preserving order, are liable, on the order of the officials mentioned in Article 16 [referred to above] to be placed under arrest *for three days without trial*; for persistent refusal to work they may, on the orders of the said officials, be *transported under escort* to their permanent place of residence."

After this, can the Provisional Regulations of September 15 be called anything but provisional penal servitude regulations? Punishment without trial, deportation under escort.... The ignorance and wretchedness of the Russian peasant is very great indeed, but there is a limit to everything. For this constant starvation and the steady banishment of workers from the towns to the country cannot but have their effect. And our government, which is so fond of governing by means of provisional regulations* will one day receive a very severe shock.

The Provisional Regulations of September 15 must serve us as a means for wide agitation in workers' study circles and among the peasantry; *we must distribute* copies of these regulations with leaflets explaining them; we must call meetings and read this law to the audience, explain its meaning in connection with the government's "food" policy as a whole. We must see to it that every worker, who is in the least class-conscious and who goes to the village, shall thoroughly understand the meaning of the "provisional penal servitude regulations" and be able to explain to all whom he meets what the regulations are about and what must be done to gain deliverance from the penal servitude of starvation, tyranny, and lack of rights.

Let these provisional regulations governing *workers' artels* serve as a standing reproach and a serious warning to the soulful Russian intellectuals who advocate the establishment of various kinds of artels and similar legal societies permitted or encouraged by the government—a reproach for that naïveté with which they believed in the sincerity of the government's permission or encouragement, without perceiving the base serf character that was concealed behind the signboard of "the furtherance of people's labour", etc. A warning—when they speak in the future of artels and other societies permitted by the Sipyagins, never to forget to tell the whole truth about the workers' artels established

* It is an old adage that any fool can govern under a state of siege. In Europe, it may be necessary to declare a state of siege from time to time, but in Russia a state of siege is always in force, supplemented, now here, now there, by provisional regulations. Are not all political affairs in Russia conducted according to provisional regulations?

in accordance with the provisional regulations of September 15, and if they dare not talk about *such* artels, to remain entirely silent.

II. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE CRISIS AND THE FAMINE

While we are faced with a fresh outbreak of famine, the old and protracted commercial and industrial crisis, which still drags on, has thrown on to the streets tens of thousands of workers unable to find employment. Distress is very great among these workers, and all the more revealing is the fact that both the government and educated "society" adopt an attitude towards the distress of the workers that is entirely different from their attitude towards the distress of the peasants. The public institutions and the press make no effort to determine the number of workers in distress, or the degree of that distress, even to the extent to which this is done in the case of the peasants. No systematic measures are adopted to organise aid for the starving workers.

Why this difference? It is, in our opinion, least of all because the distress among the workers is less apparent, or reveals itself in less acute forms. True, the city dwellers who do not belong to the working class know very little about the conditions of the factory workers, that they live now even more congested in cellars, attics, and hovels, that they are more undernourished than ever before and are pawning their last sticks and rags. True, the increasing number of tramps and beggars, who frequent doss-houses and fill the prisons and hospitals, do not attract any particular attention, because, well, "everyone" is accustomed to the idea that doss-houses and dens of hopeless wretchedness are always packed in large cities. True, unlike the peasants, unemployed workers are not tied down to a single place, and either of their own accord roam the country in quest of employment or are banished to "their native places" by authorities afraid of concentrations of large numbers of unemployed workers. Nevertheless, anyone who has any contact at all with industrial life knows from experience, and anyone who interests himself in public affairs knows from the newspapers, that unemployment is steadily increasing.

No, the reasons for this difference in attitude lie much deeper; they are to be sought in the fact that famine in the rural districts and unemployment in the towns belong to two altogether different types of economic life and are due to altogether different relations between the exploiting and the exploited classes. In the rural districts, the relations between these two classes are extremely confused and complicated by a multiplicity of transitional forms, as, for example, when farming is combined with usury, or with the exploitation of hired labour, etc., etc. It is not the agricultural hired labourer—the antagonism of whose interests to the interests of the landlord and wealthy peasant is clearly apparent and is largely understood by the labourer himself—who is starving, but the small peasant, who is usually regarded (and regards himself) as an independent farmer, who only now and again falls accidentally into some "temporary" dependence. The immediate cause of the famine—the failure of the harvest—is spontaneous in the eyes of the masses, it is the will of God. And as poor harvests accompanied by famine have occurred from time immemorial, legislation has long been compelled to reckon with them. For years codes upon codes of laws have existed (principally on paper) providing for the distribution of food among the people and prescribing an involved system of "measures". Although these measures, borrowed largely from the period of serfdom and the period of prevailing patriarchal, self-sufficing economy, correspond very little to the requirements of modern times, every famine sets in motion the whole government and Zemstvo administrative machine. And, however greatly the powers that be may desire it, this machine finds it difficult, almost impossible, to avoid resorting to all manner of aid from the hated "third persons", the intellectuals, who are striving to "raise a clamour". On the other hand, the connection of the famine with the poor harvest, together with the wretched state of the peasants, who do not understand (or but vaguely understand) that it is the increasing exploitation of capital in conjunction with the predatory policy of the government and of the landlords which has reduced them to this ruinous condition, has caused the famine-stricken to feel so absolutely helpless that, far from putting for-

ward exacting demands, they put forward no "demands" at all.

The less conscious the oppressed class is of its oppression and the less exacting it is in its demands upon its oppressors, the larger the number of individuals among the propertied classes who will be inclined towards philanthropy, and the less, relatively, will resistance be offered to this philanthropy by the local landlords, who are directly interested in keeping the peasants in a state of poverty. If this indisputable fact is borne in mind, it will be clear that the increased opposition of the landlords, the loud cries raised about the "demoralisation" of the peasants, and, finally, the purely military measures against the famine-stricken and against the benefactors, adopted by a government actuated by such a spirit, are symptoms of the complete decline and decay of that ancient, supposedly immutable and time-hallowed, patriarchal rural life over which the ardent Slavophils, the reactionaries most conscious of their aim, and the most naïve of the old-fashioned Narodniks, wax so enthusiastic. The Narodniks have always accused us Social-Democrats of artificially applying the concept of the class struggle to conditions which do not admit of its application, while the reactionaries have always accused us of sowing class hatred and of inciting "one section of the population against another". Without reiterating the answer to these charges, which has been given time and time again, we shall state merely that the Russian Government *excels us all* in the judgement of the profundity of the class struggle, and in the energetic force of the measures that must logically follow from such a judgement. Every one who has in one way or another come in contact with people who in famine years have gone to the village to "feed" the peasants—and who has not come in contact with them?—knows that they were prompted by pure sentiments of pity and humane sympathy, and that "political" plans of any kind were totally alien to them; that the propaganda of the ideas of the class struggle left such people cold, and that the arguments of the Marxists in heated battles against the views of the Narodniks on the village left them unconvinced. What has the class

struggle to do with it? they said; the peasants are starving and we must help them—that is all.

But those who could not be convinced by the arguments of the Marxists may perhaps be convinced by the "arguments" of the Minister of the Interior. No, it is not simply that "the peasants are starving", he warns the philanthropists, and they must not "simply" go to help the peasants without the permission of the authorities, for that spreads demoralisation and stimulates unjustifiable demands. To interfere in the food campaign means to interfere in the plans of God and the police to provide the landlords with workmen willing to work for next to nothing, and the Treasury with taxes collected by force. He who ponders over Sipyagin's circular must say to himself—Yes, social war is going on in our countryside, and, as in all wars, the belligerents cannot be denied their right to inspect the cargoes of vessels sailing to enemy ports, even if the vessels sail under neutral flags. The only difference between this and other wars is that in this case one side, obliged perpetually to work and perpetually to starve, is not even fighting, it is only being fought—for the present.

In factory industry, however, it has long been evident that this war is being carried on, and there is no need for government circulars to explain to the "neutral" philanthropists that it is unwise to ford the river without first sounding its depth (that is, without first obtaining the permission of the authorities and the factory owners). As early as 1885, when there was as yet no noticeable socialist agitation amongst the workers, even in the central gubernias, where the workers are closer to the peasantry than are the workers in the capital, the industrial crisis caused the factory atmosphere to become so electrically charged that storms broke out continuously, now in one place and now in another. Under such circumstances, philanthropy is doomed to impotence from the outset and for that reason remains a casual and purely individual affair, without acquiring even a shadow of social significance.

We shall note yet one other peculiar feature in the attitude of the public towards famines. It may be said without exaggeration that until very recently the opinion prevailed that the whole of the Russian economic, and even

political, system rested upon the *mass* of independent landowning peasant farmers. The extent to which this opinion had penetrated the minds of even the most advanced thinking people, least susceptible to the wiles of official flattery, was strikingly illustrated by Nikolai—on in his work published after the famine of 1891-92[112]. The ruin of an enormous number of peasant farms seemed to every one to be so absurd, to be such an impossible leap into the void, that the necessity to extend the widest possible aid that would effectively "heal the wounds" was almost generally recognised. And again it was none other than Mr. Sipyagin who undertook the task of dispelling the last shreds of illusion. What does "Russia" rest upon, what do the landowners and the commercial and industrial classes live on, if not on the ruination and impoverishment of the people? To attempt to heal *this* "wound" otherwise than on paper—why, that would be a political crime!

Mr. Sipyagin will, without doubt, contribute to the dissemination and the confirmation of the truth that there neither is nor can be any other means of combating unemployment and crises, as well as the Asiatic-barbarian and cruel forms the expropriation of the small producers has assumed in Russia, than the class struggle of the revolutionary proletariat against the entire capitalist system. The rulers of the capitalist state are no more concerned about the vast numbers of famine and crisis victims than a locomotive is concerned about those whom it crushes in its path. Dead bodies stop the wheels, the locomotive halts, it may (with a too energetic driver) jump the rails, but, in any case, after a delay, long or short, it will continue on its way. We hear of death from starvation, and of the ruin of tens and hundreds of thousands of small farmers, but, at the same time, we hear accounts of the progress of agriculture in our country, of the acquisition of foreign markets by the Russian landlords, who have sent an expedition of Russian farmers to England; we hear of increased sales of improved implements and of the extension of cultivated grassland, etc. For the masters of Russian agriculture (as well as for all capitalist masters), intensified ruination and starvation are nothing more than a slight and temporary hitch, to which they pay almost no attention whatever, unless

compelled by the famine-stricken. Everything goes on as usual—even speculation in the sale of lands belonging to the section of the *proprietors* which consists of the well-to-do peasantry.

Thus, Buguruslan Uyezd, Samara Gubernia, has been declared an "affected area". This means that famine and the ruination of the *mass* of the peasantry have reached the highest point. But the misfortune of the masses does not hinder, but on the contrary appears to facilitate, the consolidation of the economic position of the bourgeois minority of the peasantry. In the September correspondence of *Russkiye Vedomosti*[113] (No. 244) we read the following concerning the uyezd referred to:

"Buguruslan Uyezd, Samara Gubernia. The most important subject of discussion in this uyezd is the rapid rise in the price of land everywhere and the enormous speculation in land as a result. Only some fifteen or twenty years ago, excellent valley land could be bought at *from ten to fifteen rubles* per dessiatine. There were districts remote from the railway where, only three years ago, thirty-five rubles per dessiatine was regarded as a high price, and only on one occasion was as much as sixty rubles per dessiatine paid for first-rate land, with an excellent farm-house, situated near a market. Now, however, *from fifty to sixty rubles* per dessiatine is paid for the poorest land, while the price of good land has risen as high as eighty and even one hundred rubles per dessiatine. The speculation caused by this rise in land prices assumes two forms: First, the purchase of land for the purpose of immediate resale (there have been instances in which land was bought at forty rubles per dessiatine and resold within a year to the local *peasants at fifty-five rubles*). In such cases usually the landlords, not having either the time or the desire to bother with all the red tape and the formalities of selling the land to the peasants through the Peasant Bank, sell to the capitalist land speculators, who in *their turn resell to the selfsame local peasants*. In the second form, numerous land agents are engaged in foisting upon peasants from remote provinces (mostly from the Ukraine) all kinds of worthless land for which they obtain handsome *commissions* from the owners (*from one to two rubles* per dessiatine),

From what has been said, it should be clear that the main victim of this land speculation is *the peasant*, whose land hunger serves as the basis for this unimaginable and, by economic causes unexplainable, jump in the price of land. Of course, the building of railways has had something to do with this, but not a great deal, for the principal buyer of land in our country remains the peasant, who by no means regards the railway as a factor of prime importance."

These tenacious "enterprising muzhiks", who so greedily invest their "savings" (and their plunder) in the purchase of land, will inevitably cause the ruin of even those poor peasants who have still managed to survive the present famine.

While bourgeois society resorts to land-purchasing schemes for the well-to-do peasant as a means of counteracting the ruination and starvation of the poor peasants, the search for new markets is resorted to as a means of counteracting crises and the glutting of the markets with the products of industry. The servile press (*Novoye Vremya*, No. 9188) waxes enthusiastic over the successes of the new trade with Persia and discusses glowingly the prospects of commerce with Central Asia and, particularly, with Manchuria. The iron magnates and other industrial leaders rub their hands in glee when they hear of proposals for further railway expansion. It has been decided to build the following major lines: St. Petersburg-Vyatka, Bologoye-Sedlets, Orenburg-Tashkent; the government has guaranteed a railway loan of 37,000,000 rubles (to the Moscow-Kazan, Lodz, and South-Eastern Railway companies); and other lines are planned: Moscow-Kyshtym, Kamyshin-Astrakhan and Black Sea lines. The starving peasants and unemployed workers may console themselves with the thought that the state money (if the state can raise it) will not, of course, be spent "unproductively" on famine relief (see Sipyagin's circular), but will be poured into the pockets of engineers and contractors, like those virtuosi in the art of embezzlement who year by year stole large sums during the construction of the Sormovo Dam, and who were only recently convicted (by way of exception) by the Moscow Assizes[114] in Nizhni-Novgorod.*

* Unfortunately, lack of space prevents us from dealing in detail with this trial, which has demonstrated once again how the con-

III. THE THIRD ELEMENT

The term "third element" or "third persons" was employed, if we are not mistaken, by the Vice-Governor of Samara, Mr. Kondoidi, in his speech at the opening of the Samara Gubernia Zemstvo Assembly in 1900, to designate persons "belonging neither to the administration nor to the representatives of the social-estates". The increase in the numbers and in the influence of such persons serving in the Zemstvo as doctors, technicians, statisticians, agronomists, teachers, etc., has long since attracted the attention of our reactionaries, who have also described these hated "third persons" as the "Zemstvo bureaucracy".

Generally speaking, it must be said that our reactionaries (including, of course, the entire top bureaucracy) reveal a fine political instinct. They are so well-experienced in combating oppositions, popular "revolts", religious sects, rebellions, and revolutionaries, that they are always on the *qui vive* and understand far better than naïve simpletons and "honest fogies" that the autocracy can never reconcile itself to self-reliance, honesty, independent convictions, and pride in real knowledge of *any kind whatsoever*. So thoroughly imbued are they with the spirit of subservience and red tape

---

tractors and engineers run the show. For us Russians this is an old story that is perennially new. Engineer Alexandrov, in company with Shnakenburg, head of the Nizhni-Novgorod branch of the Kazan region of the Ministry of Railways, and the six contractors who were brought to trial, *during a period of three years* (1893-95), had "built" for themselves and others thousands of rubles by presenting to the Treasury accounts, certificates, vouchers, etc., etc., for work never done and for supplies never delivered. Not only the jobs, but even the contractors, were fictitious; an ordinary clerk signed as a contractor! The amounts this fraternity pocketed can be seen from the following: Engineer Alexandrov submitted bills (from the "contractors" who found themselves in the dock) for a sum of *over 200,000* rubles; in these accounts, for example, the sum of 4,400 rubles appeared instead of the actually expended sum of 400 rubles. According to the evidence of one of the witnesses, Engineer Alexandrov squandered large sums of money either on women or on his immediate superiors, the railway engineers, spending as much as from fifty to eighty rubles for a single dinner.

Most interesting of all, however, is the manner in which this case was handled and how it ended. The chief of police, to whom a detective reported the matter, "refused to take it up" (!). "This is not

that prevails in the hierarchy of Russian officialdom that they have contempt for any one who is unlike Gogol's Akaky Akakiyevich,[115] or, to use a more contemporary simile, the Man in a Case[116].

Indeed, if men in public office are to be judged, not by the positions they hold, but by their knowledge and their merits, will it not logically and inevitably lead to the creation of freedom of public opinion and public control to judge such knowledge and such merits? Will it not undermine the privileges of estate and rank upon which alone the Russian autocracy rests? Let us but listen to the arguments Kondoidi advances to justify his displeasure:

"Representatives of the social-estates, sometimes without adequately proven grounds, give ear to the words of intellectuals, even if the latter are nothing more than salaried civil servants, merely because they talk about science or quote something they have learned from newspaper or magazine writers". Well, well! Mere "salaried civil servants" daring to teach "representatives of the social-estates"! In

our affair," he said, "it is the business of the Ministry of Railways," and the detective had to appeal to the public prosecutor. In the end the whole thing came to light because the thieves fell out: Alexandrov "refused to split" with one of the clerk-contractors. The case dragged on *for six years*. Some of the witnesses died in the meantime and many of them managed to forget the most important points in the case. A material witness like Lokhtin, ex-chief of the Kazan region of the Ministry of Railways, *could not be found* (*sic*!): according to one version he was in Kazan, according to another in Yeniseisk on business! This is not a joke, reader—it is taken from the trial record.

The fact that others were implicated, in addition to those brought to trial, is apparent from the following: First, the commendable detective who brought the case to light is no longer in the service; he has purchased a tenement house, and is now living on the income from it. Secondly, Engineer Makarov, *chief of the Kazan Region of the Ministry of Railways* (who during the construction of the Sormovo Dam acted as assistant chief), tried his utmost at the trial to shield Alexandrov. He even declared—literally!—that "*it was perfectly in order*" for the dam to have been washed away in the spring of 1894. When he examined Alexandrov's books, he found everything in perfect order: Alexandrov was distinguished for his experience, zeal, and accuracy!

The result: Alexandrov—one year's confinement in a fortress; Shnakenburg—a severe reprimand (from which he was absolved by the Manifesto of 1896!). The rest were acquitted. The Treasury's claim was disallowed. One can imagine how pleased the unlocated Lokhtins and the Makarovs still in the service must be.

passing, it should be said that the Zemstvo councillors, to whom the Vice-Governor referred, are members of a non-estate institution; but since every institution in our country is thoroughly saturated with the social-estate spirit, and since the Zemstvos, too, have lost the greater part of their non-estate character in consequence of the new regulations, it can be said, for the sake of brevity, that in Russia there are two governing "classes": (1) the administration, and (2) the representatives of the social-estates. There is no room for a third element in a monarchy resting on the social-estates. And if unsubmissive economic development persistently undermines the foundations of the estates by the very growth of capitalism and gives rise to the need for "intellectuals", who are becoming increasingly numerous, then it must be expected that the third element will strive to break out of its narrow confines.

"The dreams of those belonging neither to the administration nor to the representatives of the social-estates in the Zemstvo," said Mr. Kondoidi, "are pure fantasy, but if these dreams have as their basis political tendencies, they may be harmful."

To admit the possibility of "political tendencies" is merely a diplomatic way of admitting their existence. The "dreams" referred to here are, if you will, all assumptions that for the doctor stem from the interests of the medical profession and for the statistician, from the interests of statistics, and that do not take into consideration the interests of the governing estates. In themselves, these dreams are fantasy, but, if you please, they foster political discontent.

We shall now relate the attempt of another administrator, the head of one of the central gubernias, to advance a different argument for displeasure with the third element. According to this official, the activities of the Zemstvo in the gubernia *in his charge* "are year by year departing from the principles upon which the Ordinance on Zemstvo Institutions[117] is based". According to these regulations, the local inhabitants are empowered to manage affairs dealing with local needs and requirements. Owing to the indifference which the majority of landowners display towards the right granted them, "the Zemstvo Assemblies have become a *mere formality* and affairs are conducted by the Zemstvo Boards,

the character of which leaves much to be desired". This "has led to a big increase in the staffs of many Boards and to the practice of enlisting in the Zemstvo the services of *experts*—statisticians, agronomists, teachers, sanitary inspectors, etc., who, conscious of their *educational*, and sometimes *intellectual*, *superiority* over the members of the Zemstvo, have begun to display *increasing independence*, which, in particular, is achieved by convening all kinds of *congresses* in the gubernia and by setting up all kinds of councils in the Boards. As a result, the whole of the Zemstvo administration has fallen into the hands of persons *who have nothing in common with the local population*." Although "there are among these persons many who are well-intentioned and are worthy of the utmost respect, they cannot regard their services as anything else than a means of livelihood, and they are interested in local needs and requirements only to the extent that their personal welfare depends upon these".

In the opinion of the governor, "in Zemstvo affairs, *the hired man cannot take the place of the property-owner*". This argument may be described as more cunning or more candid than the one mentioned above, depending on how one looks at it. It is more cunning because it makes no mention of political tendencies, but tries to base its reasoning exclusively on the interests of local needs and requirements. It is more candid because it openly contrasts the "hired man" to the *property-owner*. This is the time-honoured point of view of the Russian Kit Kitych,[118] who, in hiring a "mere teacher", is guided principally by the market price of this particular form of professional service. The real master of everything is the property-owner, proclaims the representative of the camp from which praises are constantly heard of Russia and its strong and absolutely independent authority which is above all the classes and which, thank God, is free from the domination of selfish interests over public life that prevails in Western countries corrupted by parliamentarianism. And since the property-owner is the master, he must be master also of medical, statistical, and educational "affairs"; our Jack-in-office does not hesitate to draw this conclusion, which is the open recognition of the political leadership of the propertied classes. What is more curious, he does not hesitate to admit that these "experts" are conscious of their

educational, and sometimes intellectual, superiority over the members of the Zemstvo. Of course, what other measures can be taken against intellectual superiority than measures of severity?...

Recently, our reactionary press was presented with an excellent opportunity to repeat the demand for these measures of severity. The refusal of the intellectuals to be treated as ordinary hired men, as sellers of labour-power (rather than as citizens fulfilling definite public functions), has led from time to time to conflicts between the bigwigs of the Zemstvo Boards and the doctors who would resign in a body, or to conflicts with the technicians, etc. Recently the struggles between the Boards and the statisticians have assumed an outright epidemic character.

In the May issue of *Iskra* (No. 4), it was reported that the local authorities in Yaroslavl had long been dissatisfied with their statisticians and, after the events in St. Petersburg in March, made a thorough "cleansing" of the statistical bureau, with instructions to the manager "in the future to engage students with extreme caution and with an assurance of their reliability beyond the shadow of a doubt". An article, entitled "Sedition in Vladimir-on-Klyazma" (*Iskra* for June, No. 5), described the general condition of the suspected statisticians, and the reasons for the dislike exhibited towards them by the Governor, the manufacturers, and the landlords. The dismissal of the Vladimir statisticians for having telegraphed a message of sympathy to Annensky (who had been assaulted on Kazan Square on March 4) led practically to the closing-down of the statistical bureau, and as statisticians from other towns refused to serve in a Zemstvo that was unable to protect the interests of its employees, the local gendarmerie was obliged to act as mediator between the dismissed statisticians and the governor. "A gendarme visited several of the statisticians at their homes and suggested to them that they submit a request for reinstatement"; but his mission was a complete failure. Finally, the August issue of *Iskra* (No. 7) reported an "incident in the Yekaterinoslav Zemstvo" in which "pasha" Rodzyanko (chairman of the Gubernia Zemstvo Board) had dismissed statisticians for failing to carry out the "order" to keep a diary, which action led to the resignation of all the other members of the bureau,

as well as to letters of protest from the Kharkov statisticians (published in the came issue of *Iskra*). Complications then began to set in. The Kharkov pasha, Mr. Gordeyenko (also chairman of the gubernia Zemstvo Board), intervened and declared to the statisticians of "his" Zemstvo that he "will not tolerate within the walls of the Board any meetings of employees called to discuss questions that do not concern their duties". The Kharkov statisticians had barely carried out their intention of demanding the dismissal of the spy in their midst (Antonovich), when the administration dismissed the manager of the statistical bureau, which again led to the resignation of all the statisticians.

The excitement caused by these events among the mass of Zemstvo statistical department employees can be judged by the letter written by the Vyatka statisticians, who sought to give a detailed reason for refusing to join the movement, for which they were justly described in *Iskra* (No. 9) as the "Vyatka strike-breakers".

Iskra, of course, reported only some of the conflicts, by far not all, that took place; the legal press reported such conflicts also in the gubernias of St. Petersburg, Olonets, Nizhni-Novgorod, Taurida, and Samara (we include in the category of conflicts cases in which a number of statisticians are dismissed simultaneously, since such cases roused considerable discontent and ferment). The lengths to which the suspicious and shameless provincial authorities went can be judged from the following:

"*S. M. Bleklov, manager of the Taurida Bureau*, in his 'Report on the Investigation of Dnieper Uyezd During May and June 1901', which he submitted to the Board, relates that work in the uyezd was carried on under hitherto unprecedented conditions. Although the statisticians had the governor's consent to the undertaking of their duties, were furnished with the necessary documents, and in accordance with the orders of the gubernia officials were entitled to the assistance of the local authorities, they *were nonetheless surrounded with extreme suspicion* on the part of the uyezd police, who *dogged their steps* and expressed their distrust of them *in the rudest manner*, so much so that, as one peasant related, a policeman rode behind the statisticians and questioned the peasants as to whether 'the statisticians were not

carrying on the propaganda of harmful ideas against the state and the fatherland'. According to Mr. Bleklov, the statisticians 'encountered various obstacles and difficulties which not only hindered their work, but deeply outraged *their sense of personal dignity*.... Frequently, the statisticians found themselves in the position of *persons charged with a crime*, concerning whom secret investigations were being made, which were known, by the by, to everybody—persons against whom it was considered necessary to warn all and sundry. The unbearable moral depression which they frequently suffered can therefore be well understood.'"

Not a bad illustration for the record of the Zemstvo-*versus*-statistician conflicts and for the description of the surveillance over the "third element" in general!

Small wonder that the reactionary press rushed in to attack the new "rebels". *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* published a thunderous leading article, entitled "The Strike of the Zemstvo Statisticians" (September 24, No. 263), and a special article by N. A. Znamensky, entitled "The Third Element" (October 10, No. 279). "The third element is rearing its head too high," writes the paper; it is resorting to "systematic opposition and strikes", in order to resist the attempts to introduce "necessary discipline in the service". The blame for all this rests upon the Zemstvo liberals, who have demoralised the employees.

"There is not the slightest doubt that measures have been taken to introduce a degree of order in statistics and in the work of assessing by the more sober and sensible of the Zemstvo leaders, who refused to permit *the Boards* in their charge *to be demoralised by anyone*, *even under the flag of liberal* opposition. The opposition and *the strikes* should at last open their eyes to the character of the people they have to deal with in the persons of the *intellectual proletarians*, *roaming as they did from one gubernia to another*, engaging, who knows, in statistical investigations, *or in educating the local adolescents in the Social-Democratic spirit*.

"At all events, the 'Zemstvo-*versus*-statistician conflicts' will bring home a useful lesson to the more sensible section of the Zemstvo people. We think they will now see clearly that in the person of the '*third element*' they

have nurtured a viper in the bosom of the Zemstvo institutions."*

We, too, have no doubt that the howling and whining of the faithful watchdog of the autocracy (the appellation, as is known, which Katkov, who for so long succeeded in keeping *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* charged with his spirit, assumed for himself) will "open the eyes" of many who do not yet fully understand how irreconcilable autocracy is to the interests of social development, to the interests of the intelligentsia generally, and to the interests of every genuine public cause which does not stand for embezzling state funds and for treachery.

This little picture of the anti-"third element" crusade and the "Zemstvo-*versus*-statistician conflicts" should teach us Social-Democrats an important lesson. It must strengthen our faith in the might of the labour movement we lead; for we see that unrest in the foremost revolutionary class is spreading to other classes and other strata of society, that it has already led, not only to the rousing of the revolutionary spirit among the students to a degree hitherto unparalleled,** but to the beginning of the awakening of the countryside, to greater self-confidence and readiness to struggle on the part of social groups that have until now (as groups) not been very responsive.

Public unrest is growing among the entire people in Russia, among all classes, and it is our duty as revolutionary Social-Democrats to exert every effort to take advantage of this development, in order to explain to the progressive working-class intellectuals what an ally they have in the peasants, in the students, and in the intellectuals generally, and to teach them how to take advantage of the flashes of social protest that break out, now in one place, now in another. We shall be able to assume our role of front-rank fighters

* *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, No. 263.

** As these lines are written, news comes of fresh and greater unrest among the students, of meetings in Kiev, St. Petersburg, and other cities, of the formation of revolutionary students' groups in Odessa, etc. Perhaps history will impose upon the students the role of initiators in the decisive struggle. Be that as it may, if victory is to be achieved in this struggle, the masses of the proletariat must be roused and we must accelerate our efforts to make them class-conscious, to inspire and organise them.

for freedom only when the working class, led by a militant revolutionary party, while never for a moment forgetting its special condition in modern society and its specific historic task of liberating humanity from economic enslavement, will raise the banner in the struggle for *freedom* for the whole people and will rally to this banner all those of the most varied social strata whom the Sipyagins, Kondoidis, and the rest of the gang are so wilfully forcing into the ranks of the discontented.

What is necessary now in order to achieve this is that we infuse into our movement, not only the consistent revolutionary theory elaborated in the course of a century-long development of European thought, but also the revolutionary energy and revolutionary experience bequeathed to us by our West-European and Russian precursors, and that we do not fall into slavish adoption of the opportunism in its various forms from which our Western comrades—who have not been affected by it to such an extent—are turning away, but which is such a strong hindrance to us in our march to victory.

The Russian proletariat, at the present time, is confronted by the most difficult, but extremely gratifying, task: to crush the enemy, whom the long-suffering Russian intelligentsia has been unable to overcome, and to assume its place in the ranks of the international army of socialism.

IV. TWO SPEECHES BY MARSHALS OF THE NOBILITY

"It is a sadly significant fact, entirely without precedent; and many unexampled misfortunes are held in store for Russia by such facts, which are possible only because of our far-advanced social demoralisation...." Thus wrote *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, in the leading article of No. 268 (September 29), commenting on a speech delivered by M. A. Stakhovich, Marshal of the Nobility of Orel Gubernia, at a missionary congress held in that gubernia (the congress closed on September 24).... Well, if "social demoralisation" has affected the marshals of the nobility, the foremost men in the uyezd and the second in importance in the gubernia, where indeed must we seek for the end of this "pestilential, spiritual canker that has seized upon Russia"?

What is the issue? The issue is that this Mr. Stakhovich (the very gentleman who wished to find posts for the Orel nobility as liquor excise collectors; see "Casual Notes", *Zarya*, No. 1*) delivered a fiery speech in defence of freedom of conscience and was "tactless, not to say cynical, enough to suggest the following":**

"*It is the duty of the missionary congress more than of any other body in Russia to proclaim the necessity of freedom of conscience*, the necessity to abolish all penalties for seceding from the Orthodox Church and accepting another faith. *And I would suggest that the Orel missionary congress openly express itself in this sense and present such a petition in suitable manner....*"

Of course, *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* was naïve enough to picture Mr. Stakhovich as a Robespierre ("that oh, so gay M. A. Stakhovich, whom I have long known, a Robespierre!" wrote Mr. Suvorin in *Novoye Vremya*, and it was difficult to read his speech "for the defence" without smiling), as it was naïve of Mr. Stakhovich to suggest to the priests that they petition "in suitable manner" for freedom of conscience. It was like suggesting to a congress of police officers that they petition for political freedom!

There is hardly need to add that "the convocation of the clergy, presided over by the highest priest", rejected

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 383-413.—*Ed.*

** *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, September 29, No. 268. I apologise to the reader for betraying such a predilection for *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*. But what can one do? In my opinion, it is the most interesting, the most consistent, *and the most serviceable* political newspaper in Russia. One can hardly term "political" literature, in the proper sense of the word, that which at best simply makes a selection of some interesting, though raw, facts and then offers sighs instead of "wisdom": I do not say that such writing cannot be very useful, but it is not politics. Nor can the *Novoye Vremya* type of literature be described as political literature in the real sense of the word, notwithstanding (or rather because of) the fact that it is excessively political. It has no definite political programme and no convictions, it merely possesses the ability to adapt its tone to the moods of the moment, to cringe before the powers that be and carry out their every order, and to flirt with an illusion of public opinion. *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, however, has its own line and does not fear (it has nothing to fear) to march ahead of the government, and to touch upon, at times very frankly, the most delicate subjects. It is a useful newspaper, and indispensable helpmate in revolutionary agitation!

Mr. Stakhovich's suggestion "both on account of the contents of the speech and of its non-accordance with the tasks of the local missionary congress", after hearing the "weighty objections" of His Grace, the Bishop Nikanor of Orel; of N. I. Ivanovsky, Professor of the Kazan Academy of Divinity; of V. M. Skvortsov, editor and publisher of the periodical *Missionerskoye Obozreniye*[119]; of V. A. Ternavtsev and M. A. Novosyolov, members of the university staff; and of several missionary priests. One might say: An alliance of "science" and the church!

Of course, Mr. Stakhovich interests us, not as a model of clear and consistent political thinking, but as a model of the most "oh, so gay" Russian nobleman, who is always ready to grab a slice of the state pie. And one can imagine to what extent "demoralisation" has penetrated Russian life generally and the life of our rural districts in particular as a result of police tyranny and the inquisitorial persecution of religious sects, if the very stones cry out, if even marshals of the nobility have begun to talk strongly about freedom of conscience.

The following instances from Mr. Stakhovich's speech give a striking picture of the outrageous state of affairs that rouses even the most "oh, so gay" to indignation:

"Go to the library of the missionary brotherhood, and take down the handbook of laws. There you will read in Article 783, Volume II, Part I, that it is the duty of the rural chief of police, in addition to preventing duelling, lampooning, drunkenness, hunting in the close season, and men and women washing together in public baths, to keep observation over the arguments directed against the dogmas of the Orthodox Church and to prevent the seduction of the orthodox to other faiths and schisms!" Yes! There is actually such an article in the Act, and it imposes many more such functions upon the rural police chief besides those enumerated by the speaker. The majority of city dwellers would look upon this article as a curiosity, as, indeed, Mr. Stakhovich designated it; but for the peasant this curiosity conceals a *bitterer Ernst*, the bitter truth about the outrages committed by the lower ranks of the police, who are only too firmly convinced that God is very high up and the tsar very far off.

And now some concrete instances that we shall cite together with the official denial made by the President of the Council of the Orel Orthodox Brotherhood of Peter and Paul and of the Orel Diocesan Missionary Congress, Archpriest Peter Rozhdestvensky (*Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, No. 269, reprinted from *Orlovsky Vestnik*,[120] No. 257):

"(a) In the speech [by Mr. Stakhovich] reference is made to a village in Trubchevsk Uyezd:

"'*With the knowledge and consent of the priest and of the officials*, *the suspected Stundists*[121] *were locked in the church*, a table was brought, a white cloth was spread over it, an icon was upon it, and each was led separately to the table and commanded to kiss the icon.

"'"I refuse to kiss idols."

"'"So! *Flog him on the spot*!"

"'The weaker ones returned to the orthodox faith after the first flogging. But there were some who were *flogged four times*.'

"According to the official data presented in the report of the Orel Orthodox Brotherhood of Peter and Paul, published as far back as 1896, and according to the verbal information given at the congress by Father D. Pereverzev, the described acts of violence inflicted by the orthodox population upon the sectarians of the village of Lyubets in Trubchevsk Uyezd took place *following a decision adopted at the village meeting and somewhere in the village*, *but certainly not with the consent of the local priest and on no account in the church*; this regrettable incident took place *eighteen or nineteen years ago*, long before the Orel Diocesan Mission was even thought of."

Commenting on the above, *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* states that Mr. Stakhovich cited *only two facts* in his speech. Perhaps so. But what facts they were! The refutation based on "official data" (of the rural police) and on the report of the Orthodox Brotherhood *but emphasises* the shocking character of the outrages which roused the indignation of even an "oh, so gay" nobleman. Whether the flogging took place "somewhere in the village" or in the church, six months or eighteen years ago, does not alter the case in the least (except perhaps in the one respect that, by general knowledge, the persecution of sects has become even more brutal of late and that the establishment of missions is directly

related to this fact). As to the local priest's *having had nothing to do with the inquisitors in rustic garb**—better had you kept quiet about it in the press, Reverend Father; you will only be a laughing-stock. Of course, the "local priest" did not give his "consent" to torture, a punishable act under the Criminal Code, any more than the Holy Inquisition punished its victims with its own hands. It handed them over to the secular authorities; nor did it ever shed blood, it only had its victims burned.

The second fact:

"(b) It was stated in the speech:

"'In that case the priest will never again be able to give the answer we heard him give here: "*You say*, *Father*, *there were forty families and now there are only four*. What has become of the rest?"

"'"By the grace of God *they have been banished to Transcaucasia and to Siberia*."'

"Actually, in the village of Glybochka, Trubchevsk Uyezd, which is the village concerned in this case, there were *in 1898*, according to the report of the Brotherhood, not *forty* Stundist *families*, *but forty persons* of both sexes, including twenty-one children. In that year only seven persons were banished to Transcaucasia by order of the regional court as a penalty for proselytising to the Stundist faith. As for the expression of the local priest, '*banished by the grace of God*', *it was a casual remark dropped at a closed session of the congress during a free exchange of opinion among the delegates*, the more so, since the priest in question was previously known to every one, and at the congress proved himself to be *a most worthy* missionary priest."

Such a refutation is truly priceless! Casually dropped during a free exchange of opinion! This is precisely what makes it interesting, for we know only too well the real value of the official utterances of official persons. And if the priest,

---

* In his rejoinder to the official denial, Mr. Stakhovich wrote: "I do not know what the official report of the Brotherhood contains, but Father Pereverzev related the details of this incident at the congress and stated that the civil authorities knew of the decision of the village meeting [*sic*!!]. ... I asked him personally whether the priest knew and he answered, "Yes, he knew too." Comment is superfluous.

who uttered these words "straight from the heart", is "a most worthy missionary priest", the more significant are these words for that very reason. "By the grace of God, banished to Transcaucasia and to Siberia." These magnificent words should become no less famous than Metropolitan Philaret's defence of serfdom with the help of Holy Writ.

Since we have mentioned Philaret, it would be unfair not to mention the letter addressed by a "learned liberal" to His Grace Ambrosius, Archbishop of Kharkov, and published in the magazine *Vera i Razum*[122] for 1901.* The author of the letter signed himself: Jeronim Preobrazhensky, honorary citizen, formerly a member of the clergy. It was the editor who described him as the "learned [!] liberal", no doubt because he was overawed by his "well of wisdom". We shall cite only a few passages from the letter, which again reveals the fact that political thought and political protest penetrate by unseen ways into wider circles than we sometimes imagine.

"I am already an old man, nearly sixty. During my lifetime I have observed not a few departures from the fulfilment of church duties, and I must say conscientiously that in every case the clergy was to blame. As for '*the latest events*', I think we should fervently thank the clergy of our day for opening the eyes of many. Now not only volost clerks but young and old, educated and uneducated and even those barely able to read will strive to read the writings of the great Russian author. People pay high prices to get his books (published abroad by Svobodnoye Slovo,[123] and freely obtainable in all countries of the world except Russia); they read them, discuss them, and finally come to conclusions that are, of course, not favourable to the clergy. The people are now beginning to understand where truth and where falsehood lies; they see that the clergy say one thing and do another, and that often even their words are contradictory. Much that is true might be said, but unfortunately one cannot speak frankly with the clergy; they would immediately report to the authorities and demand punishment and execution.... But Christ did not attract converts by force and by executions, but by justice and love....

"... In concluding your speech, you write: 'We possess a great force for the struggle—that is the autocratic power of our most devout sovereigns.' Again a subterfuge, and again we refuse to believe you. Although you, the *enlightened* clergy, strive to assure us that you

* We take this opportunity to thank the correspondent who sent us the reprints from the magazine. Our ruling classes very often are not ashamed to expose themselves *au naturel* in prison, church, and similar special publications. It is high time we revolutionaries systematically utilised this "rich treasure-house" of political enlightenment.

'imbibed loyalty to the autocrat with your mother's milk' (from the speech of the present vicar, delivered at the time of his consecration as bishop), we, the *unenlightened*, refuse to believe that a year-old infant (even a future bishop) could reason about the form of government and give preference to autocracy. After the abortive attempt of Patriarch Nikon to play in Russia the role of the Popes of Rome, who in Western countries combined within themselves spiritual and temporal power, our church, through its highest representatives, the metropolitans, has wholly and for ever subjected itself to the power of the sovereigns, who sometimes, as was the case with Peter the Great, despotically imposed their will upon the church. (The pressure Peter the Great brought to bear upon the clergy in the condemnation of Tsarevich Alexei.) In the nineteenth century, we see complete harmony between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities in Russia. In the stern epoch of Nicholas I, when, influenced by the great social movements in the West, social consciousness began to awaken in Russia and here, too, individual champions arose to fight against the outrageous enslavement of the common people, our church remained completely indifferent to the popular sufferings, and despite Christ's great commandment of human brotherhood and brotherly love, not a single voice was raised among the clergy in defence of the dispossessed people, against the cruel tyranny of the landlords; and the only reason for this was that the government did not yet dare to lay its hand upon serfdom, the existence of which Philaret of Moscow openly sought to justify with biblical texts from the Old Testament. Then came the storm: Russia was defeated and politically degraded at Sevastopol. The defeat clearly exposed all the defects of our pre-Reform* system, and before all else our young, humane sovereign (who owes the education of his mind and spirit to the poet Zhukovsky) broke the ancient chains of slavery; but, by the irony of fate, the test of the great act of February 19 was submitted for revision from the Christian point of view to the selfsame Philaret, who apparently hastened to change his views regarding serfdom to suit the spirit of our times. The epoch of the great reforms left its mark also upon our clergy, which, under Makarius (afterwards Metropolitan) carried on the fruitful work of reorganising our ecclesiastical institutions in which they hacked a window (even if a small one) into the world of light and publicity. The period of reaction, which set in after March 1, 1881, enabled an element of leadership corresponding to the manner of Pobedonostsev and Katkov to penetrate into the clergy; and while the progressive people of the country in the Zemstvos and in society are presenting petitions for the abolition of the survivals of corporal punishment, the church remains silent and utters not a word in condemnation of those who defend the rod—that atrocious instrument for the degradation of human beings created in the image of God. After all this, would it be unjust to suppose *in the event of changes in the régime from above* that our clergy, through its representatives, would praise a constitutional monarch just as it now lauds the autocratic monarch? Why then the hypocrisy? Strength lies, not in the autocracy, but in

* Prior to the Peasant Reform of 1861.—*Tr.*

the monarch. Peter I was also a heaven-sent autocrat, but the church to this day does not favour him, and Peter III was a similar autocrat who wanted to shear and educate our clergy—what a pity he was not allowed to reign for two or three years! And if the present reigning autocrat, Nicholas II, decided to express his kindly feelings for the famous Lev Nikolayevich,* where would you then run to hide with your snares, your fears, and your threats?

"In vain you quote texts of the prayers which the clergy sends up for the tsar; this jumble of words in an incomprehensible jargon convinces no one. We live under an autocracy: if ordered to do so, you will write prayers thrice as long and even more expressive".

* * *

The second marshal's speech, as far as we know, was not published in our press. A hectographed copy, sent to us by an unknown correspondent last August, bore the following pencilled inscription: "Speech delivered by an uyezd marshal of the nobility at a private meeting of marshals called to discuss student affairs." We give the speech in full:

"For lack of time I shall express my views on this meeting of marshals of the nobility in the form of theses:

"The cause of the present disorders is known approximately: They are called forth, first, by the disordered state of our entire governmental system, by the oligarchic régime of the bureaucratic corporate body, i.e., by the dictatorship of the bureaucrats.

"This state of disorder in the bureaucratic governmental dictatorship reveals itself throughout the whole of Russian society, from top to bottom, in the form of general discontent that finds its outward expression in the general politicalism, a politicalism that is not temporary or superficial, but profound and chronic.

"This politicalism, the common disease of the whole of society, permeates all its manifestations, its functions and institutions, and for that reason necessarily the educational institutions, with their younger, more impressionable public, which is oppressed by the same régime of the bureaucratic dictatorship.

"It is recognised that the root evil of student disorders lies in the general disorganisation of the state and in the general disease resulting from this condition; however, in view of the spontaneous sentiments and of the necessity for checking the development of the local evil, the disorders cannot be ignored and efforts must be made at least from this side to diminish the frightfully destructive manifestations of the general evil in the same way as, when the whole organism is diseased and is in need of prolonged and radical treatment, it is necessary to take urgent measures to suppress local, acute, and destructive complications of the disease.

---

* Lev Tolstoi.—*Tr.*

"In the secondary and higher educational establishments, the evil of the bureaucratic régime finds expression principally in the substitution of human (youthful) development and education by bureaucratic training, which is combined with the systematic suppression of human individuality and dignity.

"The distrust, indignation, and anger against the officials and the teachers roused among the youth by all these manifestations are being transferred from the high schools to the universities, where, unfortunately, the universities being what they are at present, the youth encounters the same evils and the same suppression of human individuality and dignity.

"In a word, for the youth, the universities are not temples of learning, but factories for converting the impersonal student masses into the bureaucratic commodity required by the state.

"This suppression of human individuality (in the process of converting the students into an impersonal, pliable mass), which reveals itself in the form of a systematic and chronic suppression and persecution of all personality and dignity, frequently in the form of brutal violence, lies at the base of all student disorders that have erupted for several decades and threaten to continue with greater intensity in the future, carrying off the best of Russia's youth.

"All this we know—but what are we to do in the present situation? How can we help the present acute situation with all its bitterness, with all its misery and sorrow? Give up all efforts? Abandon our youth to the mercy of fate, to the bureaucrats, and to the police, without attempting to help them—wash our hands of the whole thing and walk off? This, to my mind, is the main issue, namely, what can we do to assuage the acute manifestation of this disease, now that we recognise its general character?

"Our meeting reminds me of a crowd of well-intentioned people who have entered a wild forest for the purpose of clearing it, and who stand in utter amazement at the enormity of the general task, instead of concentrating on any one special point.

"Professor K. T. has presented to us a striking general picture of the true state of affairs today in the universities and among the students, pointing out the various harmful influences from the outside, not only political, but even police influences, upon the unstable students; but we knew all this before, more or less, albeit not so clearly as we know now.

"He suggested a radical change in the whole of the educational system and its substitution by a better system as the only possible measure to adopt, but the professor remarked that this would probably require considerable time; and if we bear in mind that every particular system in the Russian state, as in every other state, forms an organic part of the system as a whole, then perhaps the end of that time is not foreseeable.

"But what must we do now in order at least to assuage the unbearable pain caused by the disease at the present time? What palliative can we adopt? Even palliatives that temporarily soothe the patient are frequently recognised as necessary. This is a question we have not answered. Instead of a reply, we have heard vague, wavering opinions

as regards the student youth in general, which, I might say, obscure the question even more. It is even difficult to recall those judgements, but I will endeavour to do so.

"Something was said about girl students: We gave them courses and lectures, and see how they thank us—by taking part in student disorders!

"Now, had we presented bouquets or costly ornaments to the fair sex, such a reproach would be conceivable; to organise lecture courses for women, however, is not a favour, but the satisfaction of a social need. Women's lecture courses are not a caprice, but as much a socially necessary educational institution as are the universities for the higher development of the youth of both sexes. That is why full social and comradely solidarity exists between the male and female educational institutions.

"This solidarity, to my view, likewise fully explains the fact that the unrest among the student youth has also spread among the students in women's educational institutions. All the students are in a state of unrest, irrespective of attire, male or female.

"Someone else then spoke about the student unrest, saying that we must not be indulgent with the students, that their outrages must be halted by force. To this, in my opinion, the rational objection was made that even if the conduct of the students can be set down as outrageous, these are not fortuitous, but are chronic and deep-rooted and that therefore the resort to mere punitive measures, as past experience has shown, will prove unavailing. Personally, as I view the matter, it is highly questionable as to which side is responsible for the greatest outrage of all the outrageous disorders that excite our educational institutions and are bringing them to their doom; I do not believe the government's reports.

"This is the very point, that the other side is not listened to and cannot be listened to; it is gagged (the justice of my words, that in its reports the administration lies and that by its atrocious conduct it is chiefly responsible for the outrages, has not been fully confirmed).

"Reference was made to the outside influences of various revolutionary forces upon the student youth.

"Yes, those influences exist, but too much significance is attached to them. Thus, the factory owners, in whose factories these influences are mainly felt, also throw the blame for everything upon them, arguing that, were it not for those influences, there would be quiet and contentment and the peace of God in their factories; they forget or ignore all the legal and illegal exploitation of the workers, which brings about their impoverishment and rouses amongst them discontent and finally leads to disorders. Were it not for this exploitation, the revolutionary elements working from the outside would be deprived of the many grounds and causes that enable them to penetrate so easily into factory affairs. All this, in my opinion, may also be said with respect to our educational institutions, which have been transformed from temples of learning into factories for the manufacture of bureaucratic material.

"The power of the small but purposive handful of young men and women, of whom the professor spoke, to hypnotise and incite crowds

of young men and women, apparently not in the least so predisposed, to strikes and to disorders lies in the general, instinctive consciousness of the oppression weighing over the whole of our student youth, and in the generally unhealthy state of mind that is created by this oppression among student youth at all levels. This is what happens in all factories.

"I recall also that something was said about not flattering the students, about not showing them sympathy during disorders, since expressions of sympathy merely incite them to fresh outbreaks, to illustrate which argument a number of varying instances were cited. On this point I would say, first of all, that in view of the manifold confusion and the diversity of occurrences during disorders, it is impossible to point to single cases as illustrative of all, since, for every such case, numerous others of a directly contradictory character can be found. One can only dwell on the general indications, which I shall here briefly undertake to do.

"As we all know, the students are far from being coddled, not only have they not been scented with incense (I do not speak of the forties), but they have never enjoyed any particular public sympathy. At the time of the disorders, the public was either indifferent to the students or even more than negative towards them, throwing the blame entirely upon them, without knowing (or desiring to know) the causes of the disorders (credence was given, without the slightest doubt as to their veracity, to the government reports, which were hostile to the students, apparently for the first time the public has begun to doubt them). To speak, therefore, of flattering the students is quite beside the mark.

"Failing to find support among the intelligentsia in general or among the professors and the university officials, the students finally began to seek sympathy among the various popular elements, and we know that they succeeded more or less in finding it, they have begun gradually to gain the sympathy of the popular crowds.

"To be convinced of this, one need only note the difference between the present attitude of the crowd and that displayed towards the students at the time of the Okhotny Ryad[124] assaults. Herein lies the great evil: the evil is not that sympathy is expressed, but that this sympathy is one-sided, that it is assuming a demagogic tinge.

"The absence of sympathy and support of any kind on the part of the settled intelligentsia, and the distrust this gives rise to, throws our youth inevitably into the arms of demagogues and revolutionists; it becomes their tools and, again inevitably, demagogic elements begin more and more to develop among the student youth, drawing it away from peaceful, cultural development and from the existing order (if it can be called order) and driving it into the enemy camp.

"We ourselves are to blame if our youth has ceased to have confidence in us; we have done nothing to deserve its confidence.

"These, I think, are the main ideas that were expressed at this meeting; the others (considerable in number, too) are hardly worth recalling.

"I come now to the conclusion. In gathering here, our intention was to do something to calm the passions of the present day, to lighten

the heavy burden of our youth today, not some time in the future, and we were defeated. Again the youth will be justified in saying and will say that today as in the past the peaceful, settled Russian intelligentsia neither can nor wishes to render it any assistance, to come to its defence, to understand it and to ease its bitter lot. The gulf between ourselves and the youth will become wider, and the youth will increasingly join up with the various demagogues whose hand is outstretched towards it.

"We were not defeated by the fact that the measure we proposed, a petition to the tsar, was not accepted; perhaps that measure was not a practical one (although in my opinion no attention was paid to it); we were defeated by the fact that we ourselves destroyed all possibility of applying any measure whatsoever to help our suffering youth; we have confessed our impotence, and once again we grope as before, in darkness.

"What remains for us to do?

"Wash our hands of the affair?

"This darkness constitutes the terrible and gloomy tragedy of Russian life."

This speech requires no lengthy comment. It too, apparently, belongs to a still sufficiently "oh, so gay" Russian noble who, either for doctrinaire or for selfish motives, expresses reverence for "peaceful, cultural development" of the "existing order" and waxes indignant with "revolutionists", whom he confounds with "demagogues". But this indignation, if examined closely, borders on the grumbling of an old man (old, not in age but in views) who perhaps is ready to recognise something good in the thing he is grumbling about. In speaking of the "existing order" he cannot refrain from remarking, "if it can be called order". He smoulders with resentment against the disorder caused by the "dictatorship of the bureaucrats", the "systematic and chronic persecution of all personality and dignity"; he cannot close his eyes to the fact that all the outrages are committed chiefly by the administration. He is sufficiently straightforward to confess his impotence and to recognise the indecency of "washing one's hands" of the entire country's misery. True, he is still frightened by the "one-sided" sympathy of the "crowd" towards the students. His aristocratically effeminated mind is haunted by the menace of "demagogy", and perhaps even by the menace of socialism (let us repay candour with candour). But it would be absurd to attempt to test the views and sentiments of a marshal of the nobility who is fed up with the disgusting Russian bureaucracy by the

touchstone of socialism. We have no need to be diplomatic either in regard to him or to anyone else; when we hear a Russian landlord, for example, storming against the illegal exploitation and the impoverishment of *factory* workers, we will not fail, incidentally, to say to him, Cast out the beam out of thine own eye, friend! We shall not for a moment conceal from him that we stand and will continue to stand for the irreconcilable class struggle against the "masters" of modern society. But a political alignment is determined, not only by ultimate aims, but also by immediate aims, not only by general views, but also by the pressure of direct practical necessity. Whoever clearly sees the contradiction between the "cultural development" of the country and the "oppressive régime of the bureaucratic dictatorship" must, sooner or later, be compelled by the very facts of life to come to the conclusion that this contradiction cannot be removed unless the autocracy is removed. Having come to this conclusion, he will unfailingly assist—grumble, but assist—the party that can rouse a menacing force against the autocracy—a force that will be menacing, not only in the eyes of the autocracy, but in the eyes of all. In order to become such a party, we repeat, Social-Democracy must purge itself of all opportunistic pollution, and under the banner of revolutionary theory, basing itself on the most revolutionary class, it must carry its agitation and organising activity among all classes of the population.

Taking our leave of the marshals of the nobility, we say, *Au revoir*, gentlemen, our allies of tomorrow!

PREFACE TO THE PAMPHLET *DOCUMENTS OF THE "UNITY" CONFERENCE*

In *Iskra*, No. 9 (October 1901),* we told of the unsuccessful attempt to unite the section of the *Zarya-Iskra* organisation abroad, the revolutionary organisation *Sotsial-Demokrat* and the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad. We have decided to publish the proceedings of the "Unity" Conference, so that all Russian Social-Democrats may independently draw their own conclusions as to the reasons for the failure of the attempt at unity made by the organisations abroad. Unfortunately, the secretary of the Conference, elected by the Union Abroad, refused to assist in drawing up the minutes of the proceedings (as will be seen from his letter, quoted on pages 10 and 11 of this pamphlet, in reply to the invitation to him by the secretaries of the two other organisations).

This refusal is all the more strange for the reason that the Union Abroad has published its own account of the "Unity" Conference (*Two Conferences*, Geneva, 1901). It would appear, therefore, that although the Union Abroad desired to inform the Russian comrades of the results of the Conference, *it did not wish* to acquaint them with the debates.** We leave

---

* See present volume, pp. 241-42.—*Ed.*

** According to the Conference standing orders, the minutes should have been approved by the Conference itself, each day's proceedings commencing with the reading and approval of the minutes of the previous day's proceedings. But on the second day, when the chairman, in opening the session, called for the minutes of the first day's two sessions, the three secretaries in one voice declared that they could not present them. Owing to the absence of a stenographer, the records were in a most unsatisfactory state. It is quite understandable, therefore, that if the secretaries could not prepare the minutes on the night after the first day of the Conference, it was useless to ex-

it to the reader to draw his own conclusions as to the possible and probable reasons for this unwillingness.

After the Union Abroad had rejected our proposal, we on our part did not think it desirable to publish a summary of the discussion that had not been drawn up jointly by all three secretaries; for this reason we are obliged to confine ourselves to the publication of *all* documents and declarations *submitted to the bureau* of the Conference. The bureau consisted of the chairmen and secretaries of all three organisations, and all declarations were submitted to the bureau exclusively in writing; thus there can be no doubt about the objectivity of a description of the Conference which is based on the documents and declarations.

On the other hand, the publication of *all* the documents and declarations presented to the bureau is all the more necessary at the present time, since the Union Abroad has crowned its strange refusal to participate in drawing up the minutes of the Conference with a still stranger method of drawing up the Conference report. Thus, the Union Abroad *has not reproduced* in full the interpellations* submitted *to the bureau* of the Conference by the representative of *Iskra* (Frey[125]) in the name of the *Iskra* section abroad, and of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation; but it did reproduce the reply (to the interpellations) "drawn up" by the Union Abroad but not submitted to the bureau and not even read at the Conference (*Two Conferences*, p. 26). The Union Abroad is mistaken in stating that the "interpellation" was withdrawn. The interpellation consisted of the two questions submitted to the Union by Frey in the name of the two organisations (see p. 6 of this pamphlet). *Neither* of these questions *was withdrawn*; only the form was changed

---

pect that the minutes would be ready on the evening of the second day when we left the Conference. Everyone knew perfectly well that the minutes were not ready. Hence, the indignation of the Union Abroad over the "desertion" of our chairman, who "did not wait until the minutes of the Conference were approved" (*Two Conferences*, p. 29), is nothing but a subterfuge. Since there was no verbatim report, there was nothing else to do except for the three secretaries to get together and draw up at least a brief summary of the discussions. This, in fact, was our proposal, but the Union Abroad rejected it. Clearly, the responsibility for the absence of a summarised, if not a full, report of the Conference, rests upon the Union Abroad.

* See present volume, p. 230.—*Ed.*

to turn the questions into a resolution which might have been submitted to a vote (the words "Does the Union Abroad recognise in principle the resolution of the June Conference?" were altered to read: "The three organisations accept in principle the resolution of the June Conference", etc.). Furthermore, the Union Abroad has not published the declaration of the Borba group *which was presented to the bureau* (see pp. 6-7 of this pamphlet).

Not only has the Union Abroad failed to publish the contents of the speech delivered by a member of the Borba group after the Union had submitted amendments to the June resolutions, but it makes no reference whatever to the speech.* In that speech, a member of the Borba group, who had taken part in the June Conference, spoke against the amendments of the Union Abroad. The Union published the "arguments" in favour of the amendments, contained in a speech delivered at the Conference by B. Krichevsky, without, however, having presented them to the bureau. In a word, having rejected our proposal for the joint drafting of a summary of the entire discussion, the Union preferred to publish only what it thought of advantage to itself and to ignore even some of the things that were presented to the bureau.

We do not propose to follow that example. We have confined ourselves to the publication of all the declarations and documents presented to the bureau, with the bare statement as to the opinions expressed by the spokesmen of *all* the organisations represented at the Conference. Let the reader judge as to whether the articles in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, and the *amendments* of the Union Abroad have violated the principle that was the basis of the agreement drawn up at the June Conference. Of course, we shall also leave unanswered the angry words that so profusely decorate the pages of the pamphlet of the Union Abroad, including the charges of "slander", or of our having "broken up" the Conference by leaving it. Such accusations can only raise a smile. Three organisations gathered to discuss the question of unity. Two agreed that they could not unite with the third. Naturally, there was nothing left for the two organisations but to

* See pamphlet *Two Conference*, p. 28.

explain their position and depart. Only those who are angry because they are wrong can characterise this step as "breaking up" the Conference, or designate as "slander" the assertion that the Union Abroad wavers in questions of principle.

As for our view of the controversial questions of Russian Social-Democracy, we prefer not to confuse the issue with an objective report of the Conference proceedings. In addition to the articles that have already appeared, and will appear, in *Iskra* and *Zarya*, we are preparing a special pamphlet on the urgent questions of our movement, to be published in the near future.

Written in November 1901
First published in December 1901 in a pamphlet issued by the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad

Published according to the text in the pamphlet

THE PROTEST OF THE FINNISH PEOPLE

We publish below the full text of another mass petition by means of which the Finnish people express their strong protest against the policy of the government, which has violated, and continues to violate, the constitution of Finland, thus breaking the *oath* solemnly taken by all the tsars, from Alexander I to Nicholas II.

The petition was presented to the Finnish Senate on September 17 (30), 1901, for submission to the tsar. It is signed by 473,363 Finnish men and women of all strata of society, i.e., by nearly *half a million* citizens. The total population of Finland is 2,500,000, so that this petition veritably expresses *the voice of the entire people.*

The text reads in full:

"*Most puissant*, *most gracious Sovereign*, *Emperor and Grand Duke!* Your Imperial Majesty's change of the law On military service in Finland has aroused general alarm and profound sorrow throughout the territory.

The orders, the Manifesto and the law on military service, confirmed by Your Imperial Majesty on July 12 (June 29) this year are to complete violation of the fundamental laws of the Grand Duchy and of the precious rights belonging to the Finnish people and to all the citizens of the country by virtue of its laws.

"In accordance with the fundamental laws, regulations governing citizens' duties to defend the region may be issued only with the consent of the Diet. This was the procedure by which the Military Service Act of 1878 was passed, in accordance with a joint decision of the Emperor Alexander II and the Diet. During the reign of Emperor Alexander III, numerous specific changes were made in this Law, but none without the consent of the Diet. Despite this, the Law of 1878 is declared annulled, without the consent of the Diet, and the new orders issued in place of the old Law are at complete variance with the decision of the deputies to the Extraordinary Diet of 1899.

"One of the most important rights vested in every Finnish citizen is the right to live and act under the protection of the Finnish laws.

Today, thousands and thousands of Finnish citizens are deprived of this right, for the new Military Service Act compels them to serve in Russian units and converts military service into suffering for those sons of our country who will be forcibly drafted into these units, alien to them in language, religion, manners, and customs.

"The new regulations abolish every legally fixed limitation of the annual contingent. Moreover, they contain no recognition of the right granted by the fundamental laws for the Diet to participate in drafting the military budget.

"In violation of the fundamental principle of the Law of 1878, even the militia has been made entirely dependent upon the discretion of the Minister of War.

"The impression created by such regulations is not modified by the measures of relief referred to in the Manifesto, which are to operate for a transitional period as yet undefined, because the temporary reduction in the number of recruits will be immediately followed by unlimited drafts for service with Russian units.

"The Finnish people have not asked for any relief of the military burden they have carried. The Diet, which expresses the opinion of the people, has proved Finland's readiness to increase its share in the defence of the state as far as it is in its power, on the condition that the juridical position of the Finnish troops as a Finnish institution is preserved.

"Contrary to this, the new regulations state that the majority of the Finnish units are to be abolished and Russian officers permitted to enter the service of the few remaining units; that even the non-commissioned officers of these units must know the Russian language which means that Finnish-born citizens mainly of peasant strata will be prevented from filling these posts; that these troops are to come under Russian administration and that they may, even in peace-time, be stationed outside of Finland.

"These orders which do not constitute a reform but merely pursue the aim of abolishing the national troops of Finland, are a sign of distrust which the Finnish people throughout almost a century of union with Russia have done nothing to deserve.

"The new military service regulations also contain expressions, the implication of which is that the Finnish people have no fatherland of their own and that the rights of Finnish citizenship to those born in the country are denied. These expressions betray aims that are incompatible with the inalienable right of the Finnish people to preserve, in their union with Russia, the political position firmly guaranteed to Finland in 1809.

"A grave misfortune has beset our region during the recent years. Time and again it has been demonstrated that the established fundamental laws of the region are ignored, partly in legislative measures and partly in the assignment of Russians to important posts. The region has been administered in a manner to suggest that the aim was to disturb peace and order, to hinder useful pursuits, and to cause friction between Russians and Finns.

"The greatest misfortune that has befallen the country, however, is the introduction of the new military service regulations.

In its humble response of May 27, 1899, the Diet described in detail the order which, according to the fundamental laws of Finland must be observed in the promulgation of a law on military service. It was pointed out that if a new law on military service is passed in any other way, that law, even if put into operation by force, cannot be recognised as a legal measure, and in the eyes of the Finnish people will be nothing more than an act of violence.

"Everything the Diet indicated continues to be the Finnish people's unchanging sense of justice, which cannot be changed by violence.

"Serious consequences are to be feared from regulations not in accord with the laws of the country. The conscience of officials in government institutions will come into grave conflict with their sense of duty for conscience will urge them to refuse to be guided by such regulations. The number of able-bodied emigrants compelled to leave the country from fear of the threatening changes will increase still more if the regulations announced will be put into effect.

"The new military service regulations, like every other measure directed against the rights of the Finnish people to a separate political and national existence, must inevitably sow distrust between the monarch and the people, as well as give rise to growing discontent, to a sense of general oppression, to uncertainty, and to enormous difficulties for society and its members in the work for the welfare of the region. These evils cannot be avoided except by the substitution of the aforesaid regulations by a military service law passed jointly with the Diet, and in general by the strict observance of the fundamental laws on the part of the government authorities of the region.

"The Finnish people cannot cease to be a separate people. United by a common historical fate, by juridical conceptions and cultural work, our people will remain true to its love of the Finnish fatherland and to its traditional liberty. The people will not deviate from its aspirations to occupy worthily the modest place fate has destined for it among the nations.

"Firm in the conviction of our rights and in the respect for our laws which are our mainstay in our social life, we are no less firmly convinced that the unity of mighty Russia will suffer no damage if Finland continues in the future to be administered in accordance with the fundamental principles laid down in 1809, and in this way to feel happy and peaceful in its union with Russia.

"The sense of duty to their country compels the inhabitants of all communities and social strata to submit to Your Imperial Majesty a true and unembellished record of the state of affairs. We pointed out above that the recently promulgated military service regulations, contradicting as they do the solemnly guaranteed fundamental laws of the Grand Duchy, cannot be regarded as a legal act. We consider it our duty to add that the military burden in itself is not nearly so important to the Finnish people as the loss of firmly established rights and of legally founded tranquillity on this most important question. We therefore humbly pray Your Imperial Majesty graciously to give the matters referred to in this petition the attention their seriousness calls for. We are, etc."

We have little to add to the above petition, which represents a people's indictment of the gang of Russian official law-breakers.

We shall enumerate the principal facts of the "Finnish question".

Finland was annexed to Russia in 1809, during the war with Sweden. Desiring to win over the Finns who were formerly subjects of the Swedish King, Alexander I decided to recognise and confirm the old Finnish constitution. According to this constitution, no fundamental law can be made, amended, interpreted, or repealed *without the consent of the Diet*, *i.e.*, *the assembly of representatives of all social-estates*. Alexander I, in a number of manifestos, "solemnly" confirmed "*the promise sacredly to preserve the separate constitution of the country*".

This sacred promise was subsequently confirmed by all succeeding Russian monarchs, including Nicholas II, who, in the Manifesto of October 25 (November 6), 1894, "promised to preserve them [the fundamental laws] in their inviolable and immutable force and operation".

Within five years the Tsar of Russia *had broken his solemn oath*. Preceded by a campaign of vilification, conducted by the venal and servile press, the Manifesto of February 3 (15), 1899 was promulgated, introducing new regulations, according to which laws might be passed *without the consent of the Diet* "if these laws concern the requirements of the Empire as a whole or are part of imperial legislation".

This was a glaring violation of the constitution, a veritable *coup d'état*, because every law can be said to concern the requirements of the Empire as a whole!

This coup d'etat was brought about *by violence*: Governor General Bobrikov threatened to call troops into Finland if the Senate refused to publish the Manifesto. According to the statements made by Russian officers, ball cartridges were distributed to the Russian troops stationed in Finland, and horses were saddled, etc.

The first act of violence was followed by innumerable others. Finnish newspapers were suppressed one after another, the right of assembly was annulled, Finland was flooded with swarms of Russian spies and despicable provocateurs, who incited the people to rebellion etc., etc. Finally, the

Military Service Act of June 29 (July 12) was passed, *without the consent of the Diet*. This law has been dealt with sufficiently in the petition.

Both the Manifesto of February 3, 1899 and the Act of June 29, 1901 are *illegal*. This is the violence of a perjurer acting with a horde of bashi-bazouks called the tsarist government. It would be futile, of course, for 2,500,000 Finns to think of an uprising; but we, all Russian citizens, should ponder over the disgrace that puts us to shame. We are still slaves to such an extent that we are employed to reduce other peoples to slavery. We still tolerate a government that suppresses every aspiration towards liberty in Russia with the ferocity of an executioner, and that furthermore employs Russian troops for the purpose of violently infringing on the liberties of others!

Iskra, No. 10, November 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

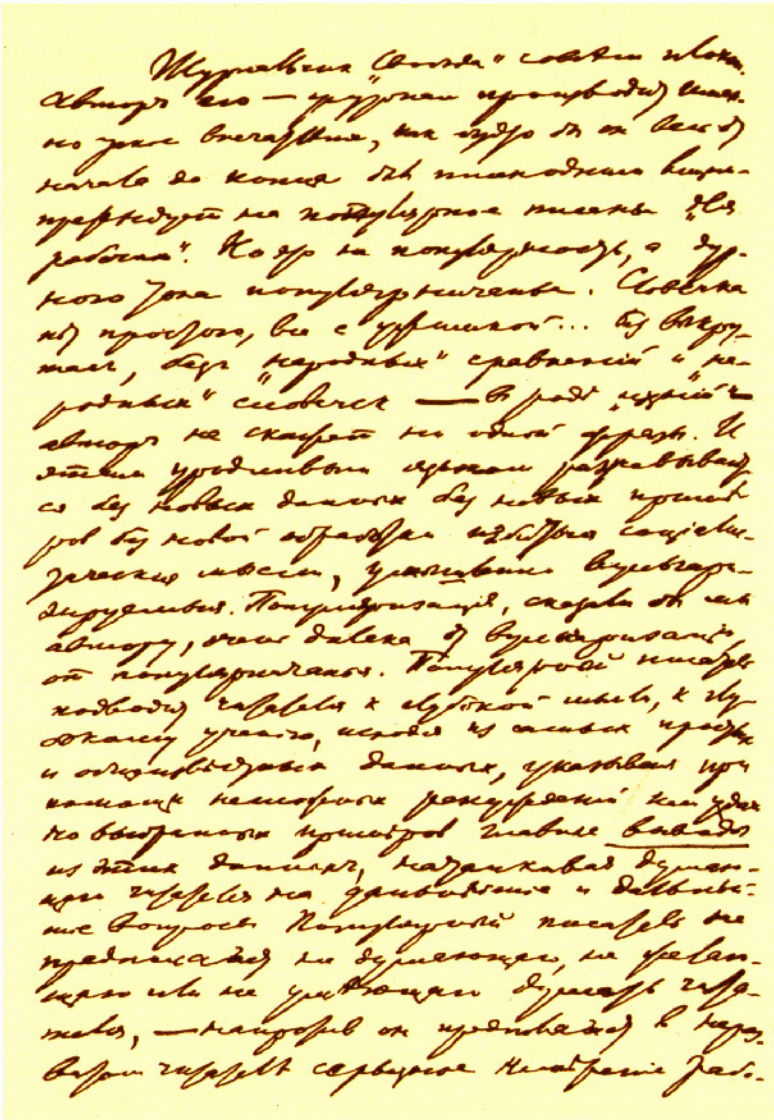
THE JOURNAL *SVOBODA*[126]

Svoboda is a worthless little rag. Its author—indeed, this is precisely the impression it creates, that one person has written it all, from beginning to end—claims to write popularly "for the workers". But what we have here is not popularisation, but talking down in the worst sense of the term. There is not one simple word, everything is twisted.... The author cannot write a single phrase without embellishments, without "popular" similes and "popular" catchwords such as "theirn". Outworn socialist ideas are chewed over in this ugly language without any new data, any new examples, any new analysis, and the whole thing is deliberately vulgarised. Popularisation, we should like to inform the author, is a long way from vulgarisation, from talking down. The popular writer leads his reader towards profound thoughts, towards profound study, proceeding from simple and generally known facts; with the aid of simple arguments or striking examples he shows the main *conclusions* to be drawn from those facts and arouses in the mind of the thinking reader ever newer questions. The popular writer does not presuppose a reader that does not think, that cannot or does not wish to think; on the contrary, he assumes in the undeveloped reader a serious intention to use his head and *aids* him in his serious and difficult work, leads him, helps him over his first steps, and *teaches* him to go forward independently. The vulgar writer assumes that his reader does not think and is incapable of thinking; he does

not lead him in his first steps towards serious knowledge, but in a distortedly simplified form, interlarded with jokes and facetiousness, hands out "ready-made" *all* the conclusions of a known theory, so that the reader does not even have to chew but merely to swallow what he is given.

Written in the autumn of 1901
First published in the magazine *Bolshevik*, No. 2, 1936

Published according to the manuscript



First page of the manuscript of Lenin's
"The Journal *Svoboda*". 1901
Reduced

A TALK WITH DEFENDERS OF ECONOMISM

Below we publish in full, as received from one of our representatives,

"*A Letter to the Russian Social-Democratic Press.*

"In response to the suggestion made by our comrades in exile that we express our views on *Iskra*, we have resolved to state the reasons for our disagreement with that organ.

"While recognising that the appearance of a special Social-Democratic organ specially devoted to questions of the political struggle is entirely opportune, we do not think that *Iskra*, which has undertaken this task, has performed it satisfactorily. The principal drawback of the paper, which runs like a scarlet thread through its columns, and which is the cause of all its other defects, large and small, is the exaggerated importance it attaches to the influence which the ideologists of the movement exert upon its various tendencies. At the same time, *Iskra* gives too little consideration to the material elements and the material environment of the movement, whose interaction creates a definite type of labour movement and determines its path, the path from which the ideologists, despite all their efforts, are incapable of diverting it, even if they are inspired by the finest theories and programmes.

"This defect becomes most marked when *Iskra* is compared with *Yuzhny Rabochy*[127] which, like *Iskra*, raises the banner of political struggle but connects it with the preceding phase of the South-Russian working-class movement. Such a presentation of the question is alien to *Iskra*. It has set itself the task of fanning 'the spark into a great conflagration',* but it forgets that necessary inflammable material and favourable environmental conditions are required for such a task. In dissociating itself completely from the 'Economists', *Iskra* loses sight of the fact that their activity prepared the ground for the workers' participation in the February and March events, upon which *Iskra* lays so much stress and, to all appearances, greatly exaggerates. While criticising adversely the activity of the Social-Democrats of the late nineties, *Iskra* ignores the fact that at that time the conditions were

* A play on the word *Iskra*, which means "spark".—*Tr.*

lacking for any work other than the struggle for minor demands, and ignores also the enormous educational significance of that struggle. *Iskra* is entirely wrong and unhistorical in its appraisement of that period and of the direction of the activities of the Russian Social-Democrats at the time, in identifying their tactics with those of Zubatov,[128] in failing to differentiate between the 'struggle for minor demands', which widens and deepens the labour movement, and 'minor concessions', whose purpose was to paralyse every struggle and every movement.

"Thoroughly imbued with the sectarian intolerance so characteristic of ideologists in the infantile period of social movements, *Iskra* is ready to brand every disagreement with it, not only as a departure from Social-Democratic principles, but as desertion to the camp of the enemy. Of such a nature is its extremely indecent and most reprehensible attack upon *Rabochaya Mysl*, contained in the article on Zubatov, in which the latter's success among a certain section of the working class was attributed to that publication. Negatively disposed to the other Social-Democratic organisations, which differ from it in their views on the progress and the tasks of the Russian labour movement, *Iskra*, in the heat of controversy, at times forgets the truth and, picking on isolated unfortunate expressions, attributes to its opponents views they do not hold, emphasises points of disagreement that are frequently of little material importance, and obstinately ignores the numerous points of contact in views. We have in mind *Iskra*'s attitude towards *Rabocheye Dyelo*.

"*Iskra*'s excessive predilection for controversy is due primarily to its exaggerating the role of 'ideology' (programmes, theories...) in the movement, and is partly an echo of the internecine squabbles that have flared up among Russian political exiles in Western Europe, of which they have hastened to inform the world in a number of polemical pamphlets and articles. In our opinion, these disagreements exercise almost no influence upon the actual course of the Russian Social-Democratic movement, except perhaps to damage it by bringing an undesirable schism into the midst of the comrades working in Russia. For this reason, we cannot but express our disapproval of *Iskra*'s fervent polemics, particularly when it oversteps the bounds of decency.

"This basic drawback of *Iskra* is also the cause of its inconsistency on the question of the attitude of Social-Democracy to the various social classes and tendencies. By theoretical reasoning, *Iskra* solved the problem of the immediate transition to the struggle against absolutism. In all probability it senses the difficulty of such a task for the workers under the present state of affairs but lacking the patience to wait until the workers will have gathered sufficient forces for this struggle, *Iskra* begins to seek allies in the ranks of the liberals and intellectuals. In this quest, it not infrequently departs from the class point of view, obscures class antagonisms, and puts into the forefront the common nature of the discontent with the government, although the causes and the degree of the discontent vary considerably among the 'allies'. Such, for example, is *Iskra*'s attitude towards the Zemstvo. It tries to fan into flames of political struggle the Zemstvo's Frondian demonstrations, which are frequently called forth by the fact that the govern-

ment pays more attention to the protection of industry than to the agrarian aspirations of the Zemstvo gentry*, and it promises the nobles that are dissatisfied with the government's sops the assistance of the working class, but it does not say a word about the class antagonism that exists between these social strata. It may be conceded that it is admissible to say that the Zemstvo is being roused and that it is an element fighting the government, but this must be stated so clearly and distinctly that no doubt will be left as to the character of a possible agreement with such elements. *Iskra*, however, approaches the question of our attitude towards the Zemstvo in a way that to our mind can only dim class-consciousness, for in this matter, like the advocates of liberalism and of the various cultural endeavours, *Iskra* goes against the fundamental task of Social-Democratic literature, which is, not to obscure class antagonism, but to criticise the bourgeois system and explain the class interests that divide it. Such, too, is *Iskra*'s attitude towards the student movement. And yet in other articles *Iskra* sharply condemns all 'compromise' and defends, for instance, the intolerant conduct of the Guesdists.

"We shall refrain from dwelling upon *Iskra*'s minor defects and blunders, but in conclusion we think it our duty to observe that we do not in the least desire by our criticism to belittle the significance which *Iskra* can acquire, nor do we close our eyes to its merits. We welcome it as a political, Social-Democratic newspaper in Russia. We regard one of its greatest merits to be its able explanation of the question of terror to which it devoted a number of timely articles. Finally, we cannot refrain from noting the exemplary, literary style in which *Iskra* is written, a thing so rare in illegal publications, its regular appearance, and the abundance of fresh and interesting material which it publishes.

"*A group of comrades*"

September 1901."

In the first place, we should like to say that we cordially welcome the straightforwardness and frankness of the authors of this letter. It is high time to stop playing at hide-and-seek, concealing one's Economist "*credo*" (as is done by a section of the Odessa Committee from which the "politicians" broke away), or declaring, as if in mockery of the truth, that at the present time "not a single Social-Democratic organisation is guilty of the sin of Economism" (*Two Conferences*, p. 32, published by *Rabocheye Dyelo*). And now to the matter.

The authors of the letter fall into the very same fundamental error as that made by *Rabocheye Dyelo* (see particularly issue No. 10). They are muddled over the question

* Lenin's reference is to the liberal landlords, members of the Zemstvo Boards.—*Tr.*

of the relations between the "material" (spontaneous, as *Rabocheye Dyelo* puts it) elements of the movement and the ideological (conscious, operating "according to plan"). They fail to understand that the "ideologist" is worthy of the name only when he *precedes* the spontaneous movement, points out the road, and is able ahead of all others to solve all the theoretical, political, tactical, and organisational questions which the "material elements" of the movement spontaneously encounter. In order truly to give "consideration to the material elements of the movement", one must view them critically, one must be able to point out the dangers and defects of spontaneity and *to elevate* it to the level of consciousness. To say, however, that ideologists (i.e., politically conscious leaders) cannot divert the movement from the path determined by the interaction of environment and elements is to ignore the simple truth that the conscious element *participates* in this interaction and in the determination of the path. Catholic and monarchist labour unions in Europe are also an inevitable result of the interaction of environment and elements, but it was the consciousness of priests and Zubatovs and not that of socialists that participated in this interaction. The theoretical views of the authors of this letter (like those of *Rabocheye Dyelo*) do not represent Marxism, but that parody of it which is nursed by our "Critics" and Bernsteinians who are unable to connect spontaneous evolution with conscious revolutionary activity.

In the prevailing circumstances of today this profound theoretical error inevitably leads to a great tactical error, which has brought incalculable damage to Russian Social-Democracy. It is a fact that the spontaneous awakening of the masses of the workers and (due to their influence) of other social strata has been taking place with astonishing rapidity during the past few years. The "material elements" of the movement have grown enormously even as compared with 1898, but *the conscious leaders* (the Social-Democrats) *lag behind this growth*. This is the main cause of the crisis which Russian Social-Democracy is now experiencing. The mass (spontaneous) movement lacks "ideologists" sufficiently trained theoretically to be proof against all vacillations; it lacks leaders with such a broad political outlook, such

revolutionary energy, and such organisational talent as to create a militant political party on the basis of the new movement.

All this in itself would, however, be but half the evil. Theoretical knowledge, political experience, and organising ability are things that can be acquired. If only the desire exists to study and acquire these qualities. But since the end of 1897, particularly since the autumn of 1898, there have come forward in the Russian Social-Democratic movement individuals and periodicals that not only close their eyes to this drawback, but that have declared it to be a special virtue, that have elevated the worship of, and servility towards, spontaneity to the dignity of a theory and are preaching that Social-Democrats must not march ahead of the movement, but should drag along *at the tail-end*. (These periodicals include not only *Rabochaya Mysl*, but *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which began with the "stages theory" and ended with the defence, as a matter of principle, of spontaneity, of the "full rights of the movement of the moment", of "tactics-as-process", etc.)

This was, indeed, a sad situation. It meant the emergence of a *separate trend*, which is usually designated as Economism (in the broad sense of the word), the principal feature of which is its incomprehension, even *defence*, *of lagging*, i.e., as we have explained, the lagging of the conscious leaders behind the spontaneous awakening of the masses. The characteristic features of this trend express themselves in the following: with respect to principles, in a vulgarisation of Marxism and in helplessness in the face of modern "criticism", that up-to-date species of opportunism; with respect to politics, in the striving to restrict political agitation and political struggle or to reduce them to petty activities, in the failure to understand that unless Social-Democrats take the leadership of the general democratic movement in *their own* hands, they will never be able to overthrow the autocracy; with respect to tactics, in utter instability (last spring *Rabocheye Dyelo* stood in amazement before the "new" question of terror, and only six months later, after considerable wavering and, as always, dragging along at the tail-end of the movement, did it express itself against terror, in a very ambiguous resolution); and with respect to

organisation, in the failure to understand that the mass character of the movement does not diminish, but increases, our obligation to establish a strong and centralised organisation of revolutionaries capable of leading the preparatory struggle, every unexpected outbreak, and, finally, the decisive assault.

Against this trend we have conducted and will continue to conduct an irreconcilable struggle. The authors of the letter apparently belong to this trend. They tell us that the economic struggle prepared the ground for the workers' participation in the demonstrations. True enough; but we appreciated sooner and more profoundly than all others the importance of this preparation, when, as early as December 1900, in our first issue, we opposed the stages theory,* and when, in February, in our second issue, immediately after the drafting of the students into the army, and prior to the demonstrations, we called upon the workers to come to the aid of the students.** The February and March events did not "refute the fears and alarms of *Iskra*" (as Martynov, who thereby displays his utter failure to understand the question, thinks—*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 53), but wholly confirmed them, for the leaders lagged behind the spontaneous rise of the masses and proved to be unprepared for the fulfilment of their duties as leaders. Even at the present time the preparations are far from adequate, and for that reason all talk about "exaggerating the role of ideology" or the role of the conscious element as compared with the spontaneous element, etc., continues to exercise a most baneful influence upon our Party.

No less harmful is the influence exerted by the talk, allegedly in defence of the class point of view, about the need to lay less stress on the general character of discontent manifested by the various strata of the population against the government. On the contrary, we are proud of the fact that *Iskra* rouses political discontent among *all* strata of the population, and the only thing we regret is that we are unable to do this in a much wider scale. It is not true to say that in doing so, we obscure the class point of view; the authors of the letter

---

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 366-71.—*Ed.*

** *Ibid.*, pp. 414-19.—*Ed.*

have not pointed to a single concrete instance in evidence of this, nor can they do so. Social-Democracy, as the vanguard in the struggle for democracy, must (notwithstanding the opinion expressed in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 41) lead the activities of the various oppositional strata, explain to them the general political significance of their partial and professional conflicts with the government, rally them to the support of the revolutionary party, and train from its own ranks leaders capable of exercising political influence upon all oppositional strata. Any renunciation of this function, however florid the phrases about close, organic contact with the proletarian struggle, etc., with which it may deck itself, is tantamount to a fresh "defence of lagging", the defence of lagging behind the nation-wide democratic movement on the part of Social-Democrats; it is tantamount to a surrender of the leadership to bourgeois democracy. Let the authors of the letter ponder over the question as to why the events of last spring served so strongly to stimulate *non*-Social-Democratic revolutionary tendencies, instead of raising the authority and prestige of Social-Democracy.

Nor can we refrain from protesting against the astonishing short-sightedness displayed by the authors of the letter in regard to the controversies and internecine squabbles among the political exiles. They repeat the stale nonsense about the "indecency" of devoting to *Rabochaya Mysl* an article on Zubatov. Do they wish to deny that the spreading of Economism facilitates the tasks of the Zubatovs? In asserting this, however, we do not in the slightest "identify" the tactics of the Economists with those of Zubatov. As for the "political exiles" (if the authors of the letter were not so unpardonably careless concerning the continuity of ideas in the Russian Social-Democratic movement, they would have known that the warning about Economism sounded by the "political exiles", to be precise, by the Emancipation of Labour group, has been strikingly confirmed!), note the manner in which Lassalle, who was active among the Rhine workers in 1852, judged the controversies of the exiles in London. Writing to Marx, he said:

"... The publication of your work against the 'big men', Kinkel, Ruge, etc., should hardly meet with any difficulties on the part of the police.... For, in my opinion, the govern-

ment is not averse to the publication of such works, because it thinks that 'the revolutionaries will cut one another's throats'. Their bureaucratic logic neither suspects nor fears the fact that it is precisely internal Party struggles that lend a party strength and vitality; that the greatest proof of a party's weakness is its diffuseness and the blurring of clear demarcations; and that a party becomes stronger by purging itself" (letter from Lassalle to Marx, June 24, 1852).

Let the numerous complacent opponents of severity, irreconcilability, and fervent polemics, etc., take note!

In conclusion, we shall observe that in these remarks we have been able to deal only briefly with the questions in dispute. We intend to devote a special pamphlet to the analysis of these questions, which we hope will appear in the course of six weeks.

Iskra, No. 12, December 6, 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

ON THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY OF G. V. PLEKHANOV

The Editorial Board of *Iskra* joins whole-heartedly in celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the revolutionary activity of G. V. Plekhanov. May this celebration serve to strengthen the positions of revolutionary Marxism, which alone can guide the world struggle of the proletariat for emancipation and resist the attacks of eternally old opportunism that is recurrently making its noisy appearance in new guises. May this celebration serve to strengthen the bonds between the thousands of young Russian Social-Democrats who are devoting all their efforts to difficult practical work and the Emancipation of Labour group, which is providing the movement with what it stands so much in need of—a tremendous reserve of theoretical knowledge, wide political horizons, and rich revolutionary experience.

Long live Russian revolutionary Social-Democracy! Long live international Social-Democracy!

Written in December 1901

First published in the magazine *Proletarskaya Revolutsia*, No. 7, (30)

Published according to the manuscript

DEMONSTRATIONS HAVE BEGUN

A fortnight ago we observed the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first social-revolutionary demonstration in Russia, which took place on December 6, 1876, on Kazan Square in St. Petersburg,[129] and we pointed to the enormous upswing in the number and magnitude of the demonstrations at the beginning of the current year. We urged that the demonstrators should advance a political slogan more clearly defined than "Land and Freedom"[130] (1876), and a more far-reaching demand than "Repeal the Provisional Regulations" (1901). Such a slogan must be: *political freedom*; and the demand to be put forward by the entire people has to be *the demand for the convocation of the people's representatives*.

We see now that demonstrations are being revived on the most varied grounds in Nizhni-Novgorod, in Moscow, and in Kharkov. Public unrest is growing everywhere, and more and more imperative becomes the necessity to unify it into one single current directed *against the autocracy*, which everywhere sows tyranny, oppression, and violence. On November 7, a small but successful demonstration was held in Nizhni-Novgorod, which arose out of a farewell gathering in honour of Maxim Gorky. An author of European fame, whose only weapon was free speech (as a speaker at the Nizhni-Novgorod demonstration aptly put it), was being banished by the autocratic government from his home town without trial or investigation. The bashi-bazouks accuse him of exercising a harmful influence on us, said the speaker in the name of all Russians in whom but a spark of striving towards light and liberty is alive, but we declare that his influence has been a good one. The myrmi-

dons of the tsar perpetrate their outrages in secret, and we will expose their outrages publicly and openly. In Russia, workers are assaulted for demanding their right to a better life; students are assaulted for protesting against tyranny. Every honest and bold utterance is suppressed! The demonstration, in which workers took part, was concluded by a student reciting: "Tyranny shall fall, and the people shall rise—mighty, free, and strong!"

In Moscow, hundreds of students waited at the station to greet Gorky. Meanwhile, the police, scared out of their wits, *arrested* him on the train *en route* and (despite the special permission previously granted him) prohibited his entering Moscow, forcing him to change directly from the Nizhni-Novgorod to the Kursk line. The demonstration against Gorky's banishment failed; but on the eighteenth of November, without any preparation, a small demonstration of students and "strangers" (as our Ministers put it) took place in front of the Governor General's house against the prohibition of a social evening arranged for the previous day to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the death of N. A. Dobrolyubov.[131] The representative of the autocracy in Moscow was howled down by people who, in unison with all educated and thinking people in Russia, held dear the memory of a writer who had passionately hated tyranny and passionately looked forward to a people's uprising against the "Turks at home", i.e., against the autocratic government. The Executive Committee of the Moscow Students' Organisations rightly pointed out in its bulletin of November 23 that the unprepared demonstration served as a striking indication of the prevailing discontent and protest.

In Kharkov, a demonstration called in connection with student affairs developed into a regular street battle, in which the students were not the only participants. Last year's experience taught the students a lesson. They realised that only the support of the people, especially of the workers, could guarantee them success, and that in order to obtain that support, they must not restrict themselves to struggling merely for academic (student) freedom, but for *the freedom of the entire people*, for *political freedom*. The Kharkov Joint Council of Students' Organisations

definitely expressed this idea in its October manifesto and, judging from their leaflets and manifestos, the students of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Riga, and Odessa are beginning to understand the "senselessness of the dream" of academic freedom amidst the gloom of enslavement enshrouding the people. The infamous speech delivered by General Vannovsky in Moscow, in which he denied the "rumours" that he had at one time promised something, the unparalleled insolence of the St. Petersburg detective (who seized a student in the Institute of Electrical Engineering in order to take from him a letter he had received by messenger), the savage assault upon Yaroslavl students by the police in the streets and in the police station—these and a thousand other facts sound their cry for struggle, struggle, struggle against the whole of the autocratic system. Patience became exhausted in the case of the Kharkov veterinaries. The first-year students submitted a petition for the dismissal of Professor Lagermark, on account of his bureaucratic attitude towards their studies and his intolerable rudeness in which he went so far as to fling copies of the syllabus in the faces of the students! Without investigating the case, the government responded by expelling the entire first-year student body from the Institute, and in addition slandered the students by declaring in its report that they demanded the right to appoint the professors. This roused the entire Kharkov student body to action, and it was resolved to organise a strike and a demonstration. Between November 28 and December 2, Kharkov was for the second time in the same year transformed into a field of battle between the "Turks at home" and the people, which protested against autocratic tyranny. On the one side, shouts of, "Down with the autocracy!", "Long live liberty!"—on the other, sabres, knouts, and horses trampling upon the people. The police and Cossacks, mercilessly assaulting all and sundry, irrespective of age and sex, gained a victory over an unarmed crowd and are now triumphant....

Shall we allow them to triumph?

Workers! You know only too well the evil force that is tormenting the Russian people. This evil force binds you hand and foot in your everyday struggles against the employers for a better life and for human dignity. This evil force

snatches hundreds and thousands of your best comrades from your midst, flings them into jail, sends them into banishment, and, as if in mockery, declares them to be "persons of evil conduct". This evil force on May 7 fired on the workers of the Obukhov Works in St. Petersburg, when they rose up with the cry, "We want liberty!"—and then staged a farce of a trial, in order to send to penal servitude those heroes who escaped the bullets. This evil force is assaulting students today, and tomorrow it will fling itself with greater ferocity upon you. Lose no time! Remember that you must support every protest and every struggle against the bashi-bazouks of the autocratic government! Exert every effort to come to an agreement with the demonstrating students, organise circles for the rapid transmission of information and for the distribution of leaflets, explain to all that you are struggling for the freedom of the entire people.

When the flames of popular indignation and open struggle flare up, first in one place and then in another, it is more than ever necessary to direct upon them a powerful current of fresh air, to fan them into a great conflagration!

Iskra, No. 13, December 20, 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

ON A LETTER FROM "SOUTHERN WORKERS"

We have received a letter from "Southern Workers" welcoming the strengthening of the revolutionary current in Russian Social-Democracy and asking us to convey their greetings to the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad. Unfortunately we cannot print the letter in full, due to lack of space. We are in complete accord with the authors of the letter that "the methods adopted in Russia for bringing revolutionary ideas to the masses through proclamations are not adequate for educating the masses to political consciousness", that "it is essential to establish a special literature for the political education of the Russian proletariat". But their proposal to issue, for that purpose, popular pamphlets of three or four pages to be distributed "simultaneously throughout Russia" is hardly feasible. We hold that the Russian proletariat is now mature enough for the type of publication that is serviceable to all other classes—viz., newspapers. Only a political newspaper can really educate the masses to become politically conscious and, in the words of the letter, throw light on "the whole of our social life, from the fourth estate to the big bourgeoisie". Only an All-Russian newspaper, if actively supported by all committees and local study circles, can achieve distribution more or less "simultaneously throughout Russia" and be published frequently enough to deserve the name of newspaper. Only the firm establishment of a revolutionary organ of this type can mark the transition of our movement from "strikes and the economic struggle to the broad revolutionary struggle against the Russian autocratic government".

Iskra, No. 13, December 20, 1901

Published according to the *Iskra* text

ANARCHISM AND SOCIALISM

Theses:

1. Anarchism, in the course of the 35 to 40 years (Bakunin and the *International*, 1866—) of its existence (and with Stirner included, in the course of many more years) has produced nothing but general platitudes against *exploitation*.

These phrases have been current for more than 2,000 years. What is missing is (α) an understanding of the *causes* of exploitation; (β) an understanding of the *development* of society, which leads to socialism; (γ) an understanding of the *class struggle* as the creative force for the realisation of socialism.

2. An understanding of the *causes* of exploitation. *Private* property as the basis of *commodity* economy. Social property in the means of production. In anarchism—nil.

Anarchism is bourgeois *individualism* in reverse. Individualism as the basis of the entire anarchist world outlook.

{ Defence of petty property and *petty economy* on the land. *Keine Majorität*.* }
{ Negation of the unifying and organising power of authority. }

3. Failure to understand the development of society—the role of large-scale production—the development of capitalism into socialism.

(Anarchism is a product of *despair*. The psychology of the unsettled intellectual or the vagabond and not of the proletarian.)

---

* No majority (i.e., the anarchists' non-acceptance of the submission by the minority to the majority).—*Ed*.

4. Failure to understand the *class* struggle of the proletariat.

Absurd negation of politics in bourgeois society.

Failure to understand the role of the organisation and the education of the workers.

Panaceas consisting of one-sided, disconnected means.

5. What has anarchism, at one time dominant in the Romance countries, contributed in recent European history?

— No doctrine, revolutionary teaching, or theory.

— Fragmentation of the working-class movement.

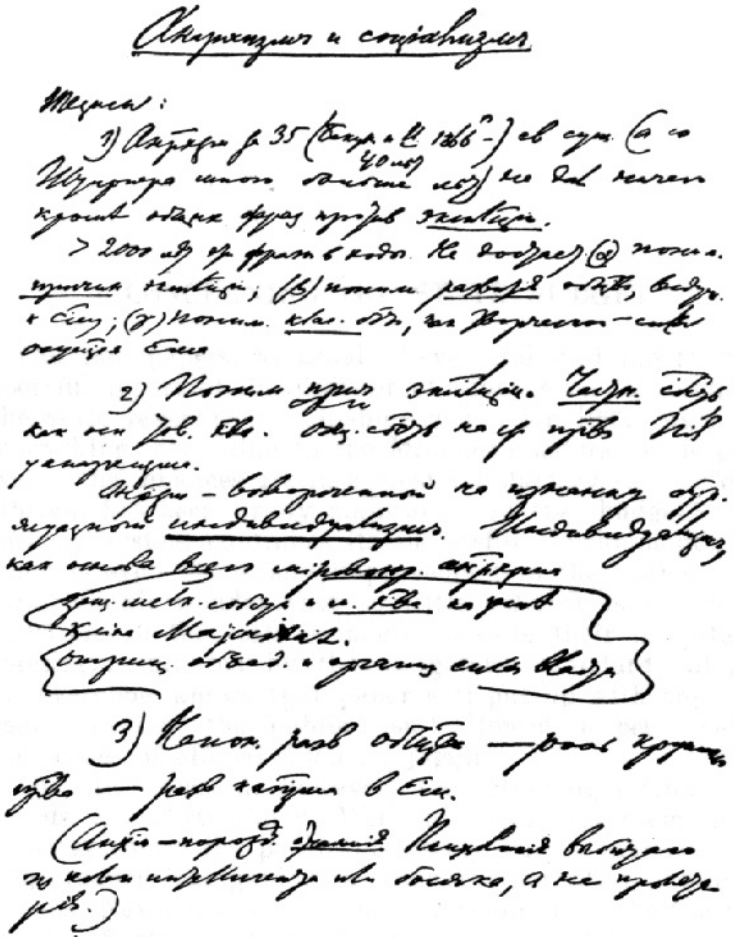
— Complete fiasco in the experiments of the revolutionary movement (Proudhonism, 1871; Bakuninism, 1873).

— Subordination of the working class to *bourgeois* politics in the guise of negation of politics.

Written in 1901

First published in 1936 in the magazine *Proletarskaya*, *Revolutsia*, No. 7

Published according to the manuscript



First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Anarchism and Socialism". 1901

Reduced

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's
"Anarchism and Socialism", 1901
Reduced

CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET

Our newspapers, as usual, have published the most respectful report of the Minister of Finance on the budget—the state revenues and disbursements for 1902. As usual, everything, according to the Minister's assurance, is going well: "the finances are in a most satisfactory state", "equilibrium has been firmly maintained in the budget", "the railway system continues its successful development", and there is even "a steady improvement in the people's welfare"! Small wonder that so little interest is shown in questions of the state economy, despite their importance; interest is blunted by the obligatory, standard eulogies; for everyone knows that paper will put up with anything, that "anyway" the public "isn't allowed to peep" behind the scenes of official financial juggling.

On this occasion, however, the following circumstance stands out particularly. With his usual legerdemain the conjurer shows the public his empty hands, makes passes, and produces one gold coin after another. The public applauds. Nevertheless, the conjurer begins to make the most frantic efforts to defend himself and is almost in tears when he assures us that he is not deceiving us, that there is no deficit, and that his liabilities are less than his assets. Russians have been so well schooled in respectable behaviour in official places that even as onlookers they feel uncomfortable, and only a few mutter the French saying under their breath: "He who excuses himself accuses himself."

Let us see how our Witte "excuses" himself. The gigantic expenditure, amounting to almost 2,000 million rubles (1,946 million), has been fully covered only because of

the 144 million taken from the famous "free cash in hand" at the State Treasury, which free cash in hand was made up by last year's 4 per cent loan of 127 million rubles (floated at 148 million rubles, of which 21 million have still not been taken up). In other words, a deficit covered by the loan? Nothing of the sort, says our magician, "the loan was certainly not floated because of the need to cover expenditures unforeseen in the estimate", since 114 million rubles remained "completely free" after the coverage; the loan was raised because it was desired to build new railways.

Well said, Mr. Witte! But, first, what you say does not refute the fact of the deficit, since 114 million rubles, even if "completely free", cannot cover an expenditure of 144 million rubles. Secondly, the free cash in hand (114 million rubles) included 63 million received in excess of the usual revenue for 1901, as compared with the budget estimate, and our press has long since revealed the fact that you *artificially reduce* the estimate for the budget revenue in order to effect a fictitious increase in the "free cash in hand" and steadily increase taxation. Last year, for instance, stamp duties were raised (the new stamp duty regulations), the price of government-distilled vodka rose from 7 rubles to 7 rubles 60 kopeks a *vedro*,* customs duties continued to increase (increases were introduced "temporarily" in 1900 on account of the war in China), and so on. Thirdly, while you laud the "cultural role" of the railways, you modestly refrain from mentioning the purely Russian and very uncultured custom of *plundering the Treasury* when railways are built (to say nothing of the shameful exploitation of the workers and the starving peasants by railway contractors!). Thus, a Russian newspaper recently reported that the cost of building the Siberian railway was initially estimated at 350 million rubles, but that in actuality 780 million have been expended and that in the end the total cost will probably exceed *1,000 million* (*Iskra* has had something to say about the plunder on the Siberian railway: see issue No. 2). You compute the revenues with precision, Mr. Witte, omitting nothing, but how about rendering an account of *the actual extent of the expenditure*?

* 1 *vedro*—about 12.3 litres (21.7 pints).—*Tr.*

Another matter not to be forgotten is the fact that the building of railways in 1902 was undertaken partly because of the military purposes of our "peace-loving" government (the vast Bologoye-Sedlets line, more than 1,000 versts long) and partly because of the absolute necessity to afford at least some "help" to oppressed industry, in whose affairs the State Bank is directly interested. The State Bank has not only granted loans with a liberal hand to tottering enterprises, but has practically taken many of them under its full control. The bankruptcy of industrial enterprises threatened to lead to the bankruptcy of the state! Lastly, let us not forget, either, that it is under the administration of the "genius" Witte that the sum of the loans and the size of the taxes are constantly increasing, despite the fact that the capital of the savings-banks is applied exclusively to support state credits. This capital has already exceeded 800 million rubles. Taking all this into consideration, we realise that Witte's economy is wasteful, that the autocracy is heading slowly but surely for bankruptcy, since taxation cannot be raised indefinitely and the French bourgeoisie will not always come to the aid of the Russian Tsar.

Against the charge of having increased the national debt Witte defends himself with arguments that are sheerly ludicrous. He compares liabilities with "assets", he compares the sum of the state loans for 1892 and 1902 with the costs of the state railways for the same years and produces a reduction in the "net" debt. But we have still further assets: "Fortresses and warships" (I swear, the report had it so!), harbours and government factories, quit-rent, and forests.

Magnificent, Mr. Witte! But have you not noticed that you are like the merchant summoned to court as a bankrupt who tried to justify himself before the bailiffs who were about to make an inventory of his property? As long as an enterprise is unshakably solvent no one would dream of asking that loans be specially guaranteed. No one doubts that the Russian people have plenty of "assets"; but the greater these assets, the greater the guilt of those who, despite the abundance, conduct the economy by increasing loans and taxation. You are merely demonstrating to the people that they should get rid of those who squander their

assets, and do so as quickly as possible. In actual fact, of all the European countries, Turkey alone has so far put forward special state assets as a guarantee of state loans. This action has naturally led to *the assumption of control by foreign creditors* over the assets that were to guarantee them the return of the loans they had advanced. The economy of the "great Russian state" administered by representatives of Rothschild and of Bleichröder—what glittering prospects you open up before us, Mr. Witte!*

This is quite apart from the fact that there is no banker who will accept fortresses and warships as collateral, that these represent a minus, not a plus, in our economy. Even railways can serve as a guarantee only when they are run at a profit. However, from Mr. Witte's report we learn that up to the present all Russian railways have, in general, been run at a loss. Only in 1900 was the deficit on the Siberian railways covered and a "small net profit" obtained—so small that Mr. Witte remains modestly silent as to its amount. He also remains silent in regard to the fact that in the first eight months of 1901 the takings of the railways in European Russia dropped as a result of the crisis. We can well imagine the balance of our railway economy if the actual sums of money plundered during construction, as well as the official sums allotted for the job, were taken into consideration. Is it not high time to place these valuable assets in more reliable hands?

Needless to say, Witte speaks in the most soothing tones of the industrial crisis: "The hitch ... without doubt does not affect general industrial prosperity and, after a certain interval of time, we shall probably [!] see a fresh period of industrial revival." Fine comfort for the millions of the working class, who suffer from unemployment and reduced wages! You may search in vain in the list of state expenditures for the slightest hint of the millions and

* Witte himself was aware of the clumsiness of his arguments in regard to "assets" and therefore, elsewhere in his report, he tried to improve the impression by saying that the growing value of state assets "has no particular significance with respect to the commitments of the Russian Treasury, since Russia's credit does not stand in need of special guarantees". Of course not! But a detailed account with a list of these special guarantees was left ... just in case!

tens of millions that the Treasury has wasted on direct and indirect support of the industrial enterprises "suffering" from the crisis. What gigantic sums are involved in such support may be seen from press reports to the effect that the total sum of the loans granted by the State Bank between January 1, 1899 and January 1, 1901 increased from 250 million to 449 million rubles, and that industrial loans increased from 8,700,000 to 38,800,000 rubles. Even the loss of four million rubles from industrial loans did not cause the Treasury any difficulty. And as for the workers who have sacrificed on the altar of "industrial success", not the contents of their purse, but their lives and the lives of the millions dependent on them, the Treasury helped these workers by sending thousands of them from the industrial towns to the starving villages "free of charge"!

Witte avoids the word "famine" altogether, assuring us in his report that the "detrimental effects of the poor harvest ... will be mitigated by generous help to the needy". This generous help, according to him, amounts to 20 million rubles, while the deficit in the harvest is estimated at 250 million rubles (if one takes as the base the very low price of 50 kopeks a pood, compared, however, with the years of favourable harvests). Indeed, how very "generous"! Even if we assume that only a half of the losses is borne by the poor peasantry, it will still become evident that we underestimated the greed of the Russian Government, when we wrote (in re Sipyagin's circular; see *Iskra*, No. 9)* that the government was cutting relief loans down to *one-fifth*. The Russian Tsar is generous, not in his aid to the peasant, but in his police measures directed against those who really wanted to help the famine-stricken. He is also generous in squandering millions in order to grab an appetising slice in China. In two years, Witte informs us, *80 million rubles* went in extraordinary expenditure on the war in China and "*in addition* very substantial sums were expended *from the ordinary budget*". This means that anything up to *100 million rubles* was expended, if not more! The unemployed worker and the starving peasant

* See present volume, pp. 231-38.—*Ed.*

may take comfort from the fact that Manchuria is almost sure to be ours....

Lack of space keeps us from dealing at length with the remaining parts of the report. Witte also defends himself against the charge of scantiness in the disbursements on public education: to the 36 million rubles of the estimate of the Ministry of Public Education he adds the disbursements of other ministries on education and "cooks up" the figure of 75 million rubles. But even this figure (of doubtful veracity) is extremely miserable for the whole of Russia, representing less than five per cent of the total budget.

The fact that "our state budget is organised mainly on the basis of a system of indirect taxation" is considered by Witte to be an advantage, and he repeats the stale bourgeois arguments on the possibility of "adjusting the consumption of taxed articles to accord with the degree of prosperity". In actual fact, however, it is notorious that indirect taxation affecting articles of mass consumption is distinguished by its extreme injustice. The entire burden is placed on the shoulders of the poor, while it creates a privilege for the rich. The poorer a man is, the greater the share of his income that goes to the state in the form of indirect taxes. The masses who own little or nothing constitute nine-tenths of the population, consume nine-tenths of the taxed items, and pay nine-tenths of the total of all indirect taxes, while they receive no more than two- or three-tenths of the national income.

In conclusion, an interesting "trifle". On which items were expenditures most of all increased from 1901 to 1902? The total expenditures increased from 1,788 million to 1,946 million rubles, that is, by less than one-tenth. Nevertheless, expenditures on *two* items increased by *nearly a quarter*: from 9,800,000 to 12,800,000 rubles "for the maintenance of members of the royal family" and ... "for the maintenance of the special corps of gendarmes" from 3,960,000 to 4,940,000 rubles. We have here the answer to the question: What are "the most urgent needs of the Russian people"? And what touching "unity" between the tsar and the gendarmes!

Iskra, No. 15, January 15, 1902

Published according to the *Iskra* text

POLITICAL AGITATION AND "THE CLASS POINT OF VIEW"

Let us begin with an illustration.

The reader will remember the sensation that was created by the speech delivered by M. A. Stakhovich, Marshal of the Nobility of Orel Gubernia, at a missionary congress, in the course of which he urged that *freedom of conscience* be recognised by law. The conservative press, led by *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, is conducting a furious campaign against Mr. Stakhovich. It cannot find names vile enough with which to call him and almost goes so far as to accuse the entire Orel nobility of high treason for having re-elected Mr. Stakhovich as Marshal. Now, this re-election is indeed very significant and to a certain degree it bears the character of a demonstration of the nobility against police tyranny and outrage.

Stakhovich, says *Moskovskiye Vedomosti*, "is not so much Marshal of the Nobility, as the oh, so gay Misha Stakhovich, the life and soul of the party, the clever conversationalist..." (No. 348, 1901). So much the worse for you, gentlemen, defenders of the bludgeon. If even our jovial landlords begin to talk about freedom of conscience, then the infamies of the priests and the police must verily be without number....

"What does our 'intellectual', frivolous crowd that instigates and applauds the Stakhoviches care for the affairs of our sacred orthodox faith and our time-honoured attitude towards it?"... Once again, so much the worse for you, gentlemen, champions of the autocracy, the orthodox faith, and the national essence. A fine system indeed our police-ridden autocracy must be, if it has permeated even reli-

gion with the spirit of the prison-cell, so that the "Stakhoviches" (who have no firm convictions in matters of religion, but who are interested, as we shall see, in preserving a stable religion) become utterly indifferent (if not actually hostile) to this notorious "national" faith. "... They call our faith a delusion!! They mock at us because, thanks to this 'delusion', we fear and try to avoid sin and we carry out our obligations uncomplainingly, no matter how severe they may be; because we find the strength and courage to bear sorrow and privations and forbear pride in times of success and good fortune...." So! The orthodox faith is dear to them because it teaches people to bear misery "uncomplainingly". What a profitable faith it is indeed for the governing classes! In a society so organised that an insignificant minority enjoys wealth and power, while the masses constantly suffer "privations" and bear "severe obligations", it is quite natural for the exploiters to sympathise with a religion that teaches people to bear "uncomplainingly" the hell on earth for the sake of an alleged celestial paradise. But in its zeal *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* became too garrulous. So garrulous, in fact, that *unwittingly it spoke the truth*. We read on: "... They do not suspect that if they, the Stakhoviches, eat well, sleep peacefully, and live merrily, it is thanks to this 'delusion'."

The sacred truth! This is precisely the case. It is because religious "delusions" are so widespread among the masses that the Stakhoviches and the Oblomovs,[132] and all our capitalists who live by the labour of the masses, and even *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* itself, "sleep peacefully". And the more education spreads among the people, the more will religious prejudices give way to socialist consciousness, the nearer will be the day of victory for the proletariat—the victory that will emancipate all oppressed classes from the slavery they endure in modern society.

But having blurted out the truth on one point, *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* disposed, far too easily, of another interesting point. It is obviously mistaken in believing that the Stakhoviches "do not realise" the significance of religion, and that they demand liberal forms out of sheer "thoughtlessness". Such an interpretation of a hostile political trend is too childishly naïve. The fact that in this

instance Mr. Stakhovich came forward as advocate of the entire liberal trend was proved best of all by *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* itself; otherwise, what need was there for waging such a campaign against a single speech? What need was there for speaking, not about Stakhovich, but about the Stakhoviches, about the "intellectual crowd"?

Moskovskiye Vedomosti's error was, of course, deliberate. That paper is more unwilling than it is unable to analyse the liberalism it hates from the class point of view. That it does not desire to do so goes without saying; but its inability to do so interests us very much more, because this is a complaint that even very many revolutionaries and socialists suffer from. Thus, the authors of the letter published in No. 12 of *Iskra*, who accuse us of departing from the "class point of view" for striving in our newspaper to follow all manifestations of liberal discontent and protest, suffer from this complaint, as do also the authors of *Proletarskaya Borba*[133] and of several pamphlets in "The Social-Democratic Library",[134] who imagine that our autocracy represents the absolutist rule of the bourgeoisie; likewise the Martynovs, who seek to persuade us to abandon the many-sided campaign of exposure (i.e., the widest possible political agitation) against the autocracy and to concentrate our efforts mainly upon the struggle for economic reforms (to give something "positive" to the working class, to put forward in its name "concrete demands" for legislative and administrative measures "which promise certain palpable results"); likewise, too, the Nadezhdins, who, on reading the correspondence in our paper on the statistical conflicts, ask in astonishment: "Good Lord, what is this—a Zemstvo paper?"

All these socialists forget that the interests of the autocracy coincide only with certain interests of the propertied classes, and only under certain circumstances; frequently it happens that its interests do not coincide with the interests of these classes as a whole, but only with those of certain of their strata. The interests of other bourgeois strata and the more widely understood interests of the *entire* bourgeoisie, of the development of capitalism as a whole, necessarily give rise to a liberal opposition to the autocracy. For instance, the autocracy guarantees the

bourgeoisie opportunities to employ the crudest forms of exploitation, but, on the other hand, places a thousand obstacles in the way of the extensive development of the productive forces and the spread of education; in this way it arouses against itself, not only the petty bourgeoisie, but at times even the big bourgeoisie. The autocracy guarantees (?) the bourgeoisie protection against socialism, but since the people are deprived of rights, this protection is necessarily transformed into a system of police outrages that rouse the indignation of the entire people. What the result of these antagonistic tendencies is, what relative strength of conservative and liberal views, or trends, among the bourgeoisie obtains at the present moment, cannot be learned from a couple of general theses, for this depends on all the special features of the social and political situation at a given moment. To determine this, one must study the situation in detail and carefully watch all the conflicts with the government, no matter by what social stratum they are initiated. It is precisely the "class point of view" that makes it *impermissible* for a Social-Democrat to remain indifferent to the discontent and the protests of the "Stakhoviches".

The reasoning and activity of the above-mentioned socialists show that they are indifferent to liberalism and thus reveal their incomprehension of the basic theses of the *Communist Manifesto*, the "Gospel" of international Social-Democracy. Let us recall, for instance, the words that the bourgeoisie itself provides material for the political education of the proletariat by its struggle for power, by the conflicts of various strata and groups within it, etc.[135] Only in politically free countries has the proletariat easy access to this material (and then only to part of it). In enslaved Russia, however, we Social-Democrats must work hard to obtain this "material" for the working class, i.e., we must *ourselves undertake* the task of conducting general political agitation, of carrying on a public exposure campaign against the autocracy. This task is particularly imperative in periods of political ferment. We must bear in mind that in one year of intensified political life the proletariat can obtain more revolutionary training than in several years of political calm. For this reason the tendency of the above-mentioned socialists consciously or

unconsciously *to restrict* the scope and content of political agitation is particularly harmful.

Let us recall also the words that the Communists support *every* revolutionary movement against the existing system. Those words are often interpreted too narrowly, and are not taken to imply support for the liberal opposition. It must not be forgotten, however, that there are periods when every conflict with the government arising out of progressive social interests, however small, may under certain conditions (*of which our support is one*) flare up into a general conflagration. Suffice it to recall the great social movement which developed in Russia out of the struggle between the students and the government over academic demands,[136] or the conflict that arose in France between all the progressive elements and the militarists over a trial in which the verdict had been rendered on the basis of forged evidence.[137] Hence, it is our bounden duty to explain to the proletariat every liberal and democratic protest, to widen and support it, with the active participation of the workers, be it a conflict between the Zemstvo and the Ministry of the Interior, between the nobility and the police regime of the Orthodox Church, between statisticians and the bureaucrats, between peasants and the "Zemstvo" officials, between religious sects and the rural police, etc., etc. Those who contemptuously turn up their noses at the slight importance of some of these conflicts, or at the "hopelessness" of the attempts to fan them into a general conflagration, do not realise that all-sided political agitation is a focus in which the vital interests of political education of the proletariat coincide with the vital interests of social development as a whole, of the entire people, that is, of all its democratic elements. It is our direct duty to concern ourselves with every liberal question, to determine our Social-Democratic attitude towards it, to help the proletariat to take an active part in its solution and to accomplish the solution in its own, proletarian way. Those who refrain from concerning themselves in this way (whatever their intentions) in actuality leave the liberals in command, place in their hands the political education of the workers, and concede the hegemony in the political struggle to elements which, in the final analysis, are leaders of bourgeois democracy.

The class character of the Social-Democratic movement must not be expressed in the restriction of our tasks to the direct and immediate needs of the "labour movement pure and simple". It must be expressed in our leadership of every aspect and every manifestation of the great struggle for liberation that is being waged by the proletariat, the only truly revolutionary class in modern society. Social-Democracy must constantly and unswervingly spread the influence of the labour movement to all spheres of the social and political life of contemporary society. It must lead, not only the economic, but also the political, struggle of the proletariat. It must never for a moment lose sight of our ultimate goal, but always carry on propaganda for the proletarian ideology—the theory of scientific socialism, viz., Marxism—guard it against distortion, and develop it further. We must untiringly combat any and every bourgeois ideology, regardless of the fashionable and striking garb in which it may drape itself. The socialists we have mentioned above depart from the "class" point of view also because, and to the extent that, they remain indifferent to the task of combating the "criticism of Marxism". Only the blind fail to see that this "criticism" has taken root more rapidly in Russia than in any other country, and has been more enthusiastically taken up by Russian liberal propaganda than by any other, precisely for the reason that it is one of the elements of the bourgeois (now consciously bourgeois) democracy now in formation in Russia.

It is particularly in regard to the political struggle that the "class point of view" demands that the proletariat *give an impetus* to every democratic movement. The political demands of working-class democracy do not differ in principle from those of bourgeois democracy, they differ only in degree. In the struggle for economic emancipation, for the socialist revolution, the proletariat stands on a basis different in principle and it stands alone (the small producer will come to its aid only to the extent that he enters, or is preparing to enter, its ranks). In the struggle for political liberation, however, we have many allies, towards whom we must not remain indifferent. But while our allies in the bourgeois-democratic camp, in struggling for liberal reforms, will always glance back and seek to adjust matters

so that they will be able, as before, "to eat well, sleep peacefully, and live merrily" at other people's expense, the proletariat will march forward to the end, without looking back. While the confreres of R. N. S. (author of the preface to Witte's Memorandum) haggle with the government over the rights of the authoritative Zemstvo, or over a constitution, we will struggle for the democratic republic. We will not forget, however, that if we want to push someone forward, we must continuously keep our hands on that someone's shoulders. The party of the proletariat must learn to catch every liberal just at the moment when he is prepared to move forward an inch, and make him move forward a yard. If he is obdurate, we will go forward without him and over him.

Iskra, No. 16, February 1, 1902

Published according to the *Iskra* text

REPLY TO "A READER"

The following letter has been received by the Editorial Board:

"In dealing with the question of agitation (if I am not mistaken, in No. 13) *Iskra* opposes agitational leaflets (pamphlets of two or three pages) on political subjects. In the opinion of the editors, newspapers can successfully replace such literature. Newspapers are, of course, a fine thing. Nobody would dream of disputing that. But can they replace leaflets that are specially intended for widespread distribution among the masses? The editors have received a letter from Russia in which a group of workers-agitators gave their opinion on this subject. *Iskra*'s reply is obviously due to a misunderstanding. The question of agitation is as important today as the question of demonstrations. It is, therefore, to be desired that the editors raise this question once again and on this occasion devote to it greater attention.

"*A Reader*"

Anyone who takes the trouble to read our reply to the letter from "Southern Workers" in No. 13 of *Iskra** together with this letter will easily convince himself that it is precisely the author of the letter who labours under an obvious misunderstanding. There was no question of *Iskra*'s "opposing agitational leaflets"; it never entered anyone's head that a newspaper could "replace leaflets". Our correspondent did not notice that leaflets are in fact proclamations. Such literature as proclamations *cannot be replaced by anything* and will always be *absolutely essential*—on this point the "Southern Workers" and *Iskra* are in full accord. But they are also agreed that this type of literature *is not sufficient*. If we speak of good housing for the workers and at the same time say that good food is not enough

* See present volume, p. 326.—*Ed.*

for them, that would hardly be taken to mean that we are "against" good food. The question is—which is the highest form of *agitational* literature? The "Southern Workers" *did not say a word* about the newspaper when they raised this question. Their silence could, of course, have been due to local circumstances, but we, although we did not in the least wish to enter into "disputes" with our correspondents, naturally could not refrain from reminding them that the proletariat should also organise its own newspaper just as the other classes of the population have done, that fragmentary work alone is not enough, and that the regular, active, and general work of all localities for a revolutionary organ is essential.

As far as the three- or four-page pamphlets are concerned, *we did not speak* "against" them *in the least*, but merely doubted the practicability of a plan to develop them into *regular* literature distributed "simultaneously throughout Russia". If they consist of three or four pages, they will be, essentially, only proclamations. In all parts of Russia we have many very good proclamations that are not in the least heavy reading, both student and workers' proclamations, that sometimes run to six or eight small pages. A really *popular* pamphlet, capable of *explaining* even one single question to a completely unprepared worker, would probably be much bigger in size and there would be no need and no possibility of distributing it "simultaneously throughout Russia" (since it is not only of topical significance). Fully recognising, as we do, every variety of political literature, old and new, so long as it is really good political literature, we would advise working, not upon an invention of a midway type of agitational medium—something between leaflet and popular pamphlet, but for a revolutionary organ that *really* deserves the name of periodical (appearing, not once, but at least two or four times, a month) and which is an *All*-Russian organ.

Iskra, No. 16, February 1, 1902

Published according to the *Iskra* text

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

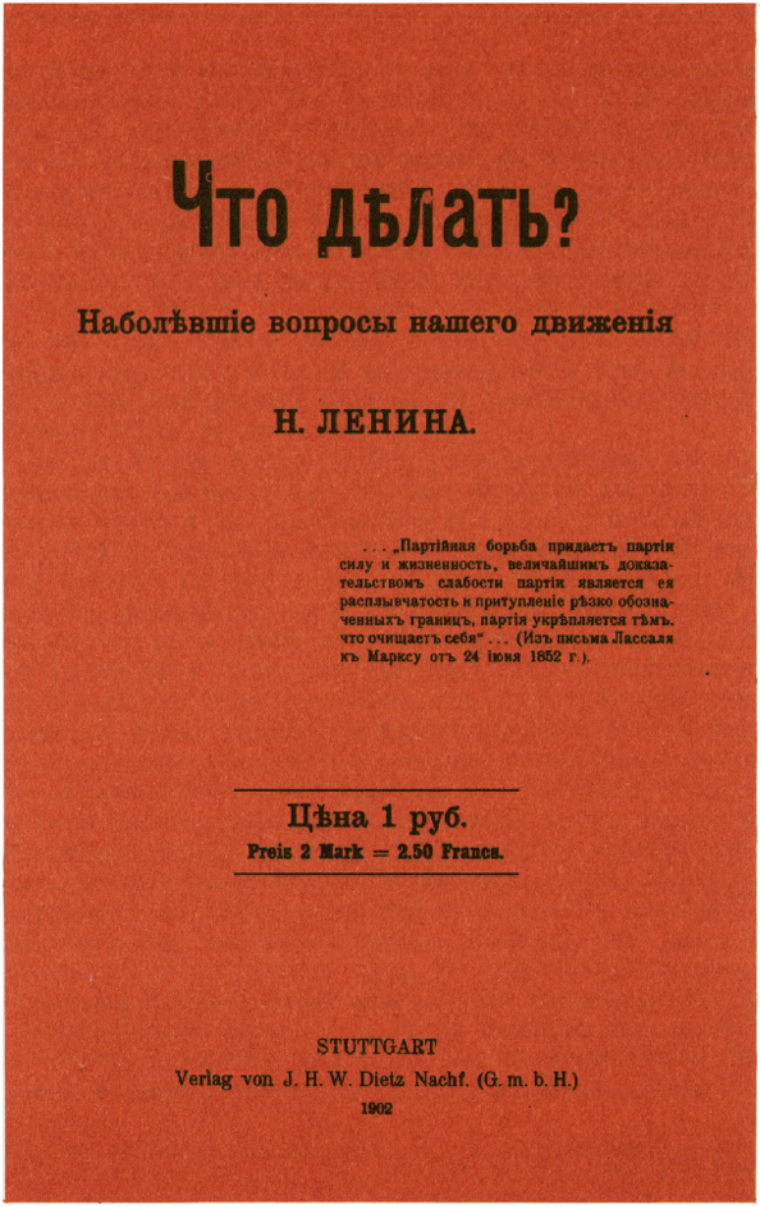
BURNING QUESTIONS OF OUR MOVEMENT[138]

"...Party struggles lend a party strength and vitality; the greatest proof of a party's weakness is its diffuseness and the blurring of clear demarcations; a party becomes stronger by purging itself...."

(From a letter of Lassalle to Marx, of June 24, 1852)

Written between the autumn of 1901 and February 1902
First published as a separate work in March 1902

Published according to the text of the book checked with that in the collection *Twelve Years*, by Vl. Ilyin, 1907



Cover of Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* 1902
Reduced

PREFACE

According to the author's original plan, the present pamphlet was to have been devoted to a detailed development of the ideas expressed in the article "Where To Begin" (*Iskra*, No. 4, May 1901).* We must first apologise to the reader for the delay in fulfilling the promise made in that article (and repeated in response to many private inquiries and letters). One of the reasons for this delay was the attempt, undertaken in June of the past year (1901), to unite all the Social-Democratic organisations abroad. It was natural to wait for the results of this attempt, for, had the effort proved successful, it would perhaps have been necessary to expound *Iskra*'s conceptions of organisation from a somewhat different approach; in any case, such a success promised to put an end very quickly to the existence of the two trends in the Russian Social-Democratic movement. As the reader knows, the attempt failed, and, as we propose to show, was bound to fail after the new swing of *Rabochaya Dyelo*, in its issue No. 10, towards Economism. It was found to be absolutely essential to begin a determined struggle against this trend, diffuse and ill-defined, but for that reason the more persistent, the more capable of reasserting itself in diverse forms. Accordingly, the original plan of the pamphlet was altered and considerably enlarged.

Its main theme was to have been the three questions raised in the article "Where To Begin"—the character and main content of our political agitation; our organisational tasks; and the plan for building, simultaneously and from various sides, a militant, All-Russian organisation. These questions have long engaged the mind of the author, who

* See present volume, pp. 13-24.—*Ed.*

tried to raise them in *Rabochaya Gazeta*[139] during one of the unsuccessful attempts to revive that paper (see Chapter V). But the original plan to confine the pamphlet to an analysis of only these three questions and to set forth our views as far as possible in a positive form, without, or almost without, entering into polemics, proved wholly impracticable, for two reasons. On the one hand, Economism proved to be much more tenacious than we had supposed [we employ the term Economism in the broad sense, as explained in *Iskra*, No. 12 (December 1901), in the article entitled "A Talk With Defenders of Economism", which was a synopsis, so to speak, of the present pamphlet*]. It became clear beyond doubt that the differences regarding the solution of the three questions mentioned were explainable to a far greater degree by the basic antithesis between the two trends in the Russian Social-Democratic movement than by differences over details. On the other hand, the perplexity of the Economists over the practical application of our views in *Iskra* clearly revealed that we often speak literally in different tongues and therefore *cannot* arrive at an understanding without beginning *ab ovo*, and that an attempt must be made, in the simplest possible style, illustrated by numerous and concrete examples, *systematically to "clarify" all* our basic points of difference with all the Economists. I resolved to make such an attempt at "clarification", fully realising that it would greatly increase the size of the pamphlet and delay its publication; I saw *no other way* of meeting my pledge I had made in the article "Where To Begin". Thus, to the apologies for the delay, I must add others for the serious literary shortcomings of the pamphlet. I had to work *in great haste*, with frequent interruptions by a variety of other tasks.

The examination of the above three questions still constitutes the main theme of this pamphlet, but I found it necessary to begin with two questions of a more general nature—why such an "innocent" and "natural" slogan as "freedom of criticism" should be for us a veritable war-cry, and why we cannot come to an understanding even on the fundamental question of the role of Social-Democrats in

* See present volume, pp. 313-20.—*Ed.*

relation to the spontaneous mass movement. Further, the exposition of our views on the character and substance of political agitation developed into an explanation of the difference between trade-unionist politics and Social-Democratic politics, while the exposition of our views on organisational tasks developed into an explanation of the difference between the amateurish methods which satisfy the Economists, and the organisation of revolutionaries which we hold to be indispensable. Further, I advance the "plan" for an All-Russian political newspaper with all the more insistence because the objections raised against it are untenable, and because no real answer has been given to the question I raised in the article "'Where To Begin" as to how we can set to work from all sides simultaneously to create the organisation we need. Finally, in the concluding part, I hope to show that we did all we could to prevent a decisive break with the Economists, a break which nevertheless proved inevitable; that *Rabochaya Dyelo* acquired a special significance, a "historical" significance, if you will, because it expressed fully and strikingly, not consistent Economism, but the confusion and vacillation which constitute the distinguishing feature of *an entire period* in the history of Russian Social-Democracy; and that therefore the polemic with *Rabochaya Dyelo*, which may upon first view seem excessively detailed, also acquires significance, for we can make no progress until we have completely put an end to this period.

N. Lenin

February 1902

I

DOGMATISM AND "FREEDOM OF CRITICISM"

A. WHAT DOES "FREEDOM OF CRITICISM" MEAN?

"Freedom of criticism" is undoubtedly the most fashionable slogan at the present time, and the one most frequently employed in the controversies between socialists and democrats in all countries. At first sight, nothing would appear to be more strange than the solemn appeals to freedom of criticism made by one of the parties to the dispute. Have voices been raised in the advanced parties against the constitutional law of the majority of European countries which guarantees freedom to science and scientific investigation? "Something must be wrong here," will be the comment of the onlooker who has heard this fashionable slogan repeated at every turn but has not yet penetrated the essence of the disagreement among the disputants; "evidently this slogan is one of the conventional phrases which, like nicknames, become legitimised by use, and become almost generic terms."

In fact, it is no secret for anyone that two trends have taken form in present-day international* Social-Democ-

* Incidentally, in the history of modern socialism this is a phenomenon, perhaps unique and in its way very consoling, namely, that the strife of the various trends within the socialist movement has from national become international. Formerly, the disputes between Lassalleans and Eisenachers,[140] between Guesdists and Possibilists,[141] between Fabians and Social-Democrats, and between Narodnaya Volya adherents and Social-Democrats, remained confined within purely national frameworks, reflecting purely national features, and proceeding, as it were, on different planes. At the present time (as is now evident), the English Fabians, the French Ministerialists, the

racy. The conflict between these trends now flares up in a bright flame and now dies down and smoulders under the ashes of imposing "truce resolutions". The essence of the "new" trend, which adopts a "critical" attitude towards "obsolete dogmatic" Marxism, has been clearly enough *presented* by Bernstein and *demonstrated* by Millerand.

Social-Democracy must change from a party of social revolution into a democratic party of social reforms. Bernstein has surrounded this political demand with a whole battery of well-attuned "new" arguments and reasonings. Denied was the possibility of putting socialism on a scientific basis and of demonstrating its necessity and inevitability from the point of view of the materialist conception of history. Denied was the fact of growing impoverishment, the process of proletarisation, and the intensification of capitalist contradictions; the very concept, "*ultimate aim*", was declared to be unsound, and the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat was completely rejected. Denied was the antithesis in principle between liberalism and socialism. Denied was *the theory of the class struggle*, on the alleged grounds that it could not be applied to a strictly democratic society governed according to the will of the majority, etc.

Thus, the demand for a decisive turn from revolutionary Social-Democracy to bourgeois social-reformism was accompanied by a no less decisive turn towards bourgeois criticism of all the fundamental ideas of Marxism. In view of the fact that this criticism of Marxism has long been directed from the political platform, from university chairs, in numerous pamphlets and in a series of learned treatises, in view of the fact that the entire younger generation of the educated classes has been systematically reared for decades on this criticism, it is not surprising that the "new critical" trend in Social-Democracy should spring up, all

---

German Bernsteinians, and the Russian Critics—all belong to the same family, all extol each other, learn from each other, and together take up arms against "dogmatic" Marxism. In this first really international battle with socialist opportunism, international revolutionary Social-Democracy will perhaps become sufficiently strengthened to put an end to the political reaction that has long reigned in Europe?

complete, like Minerva from the head of Jove. The content of this new trend did not have to grow and take shape, it was transferred bodily from bourgeois to socialist literature.

To proceed. If Bernstein's theoretical criticism and political yearnings were still unclear to anyone, the French took the trouble strikingly to demonstrate the "new method". In this instance, too, France has justified its old reputation of being "the land where, more than anywhere else, the historical class struggles were each time fought out to a decision..." (Engels, Introduction to Marx's *Der 18 Brumaire*).[142] The French socialists have begun, not to theorise, but to act. The democratically more highly developed political conditions in France have permitted them to put "Bernsteinism into practice" immediately, with all its consequences. Millerand has furnished an excellent example of practical Bernsteinism; not without reason did Bernstein and Vollmar rush so zealously to defend and laud him. Indeed, if Social-Democracy, in essence, is merely a party of reform and must be bold enough to admit this openly, then not only has a socialist the right to join a bourgeois cabinet, but he must always strive to do so. If democracy, in essence, means the abolition of class domination, then why should not a socialist minister charm the whole bourgeois world by orations on class collaboration? Why should he not remain in the cabinet even after the shooting-down of workers by gendarmes has exposed, for the hundredth and thousandth time, the real nature of the democratic collaboration of classes? Why should he not personally take part in greeting the tsar, for whom the French socialists now have no other name than hero of the gallows, knout, and exile (*knouteur, pendeur et déportateur*)? And the reward for this utter humiliation and self-degradation of socialism in the face of the whole world, for the corruption of the socialist consciousness of the working masses—the only basis that can guarantee our victory—the reward for this is pompous *projects* for miserable reforms, so miserable in fact that much more has been obtained from bourgeois governments!

He who does not deliberately close his eyes cannot fail to see that the new "critical" trend in socialism is nothing more nor less than a new variety of *opportunism*. And if we judge people, not by the glittering uniforms they don or

by the high-sounding appellations they give themselves, but by their actions and by what they actually advocate, it will be clear that "freedom of criticism" means freedom for an opportunist trend in Social-Democracy, freedom to convert Social-Democracy into a democratic party of reform, freedom to introduce bourgeois ideas and bourgeois elements into socialism.

"Freedom" is a grand word, but under the banner of freedom for industry the most predatory wars were waged, under the banner of freedom of labour, the working people were robbed. The modern use of the term "freedom of criticism" contains the same inherent falsehood. Those who are really convinced that they have made progress in science would not demand freedom for the new views to continue side by side with the old, but the substitution of the new views for the old. The cry heard today, "Long live freedom of criticism", is too strongly reminiscent of the fable of the empty barrel.

We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and we have to advance almost constantly under their fire. We have combined, by a freely adopted decision, for the purpose of fighting the enemy, and not of retreating into the neighbouring marsh, the inhabitants of which, from the very outset, have reproached us with having separated ourselves into an exclusive group and with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation. And now some among us begin to cry out: Let us go into the marsh! And when we begin to shame them, they retort: What backward people you are! Are you not ashamed to deny us the liberty to invite you to take a better road! Oh, yes, gentlemen! You are free not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render *you* every assistance to get there. Only let go of our hands, don't clutch at us and don't besmirch the grand word freedom, for we too are "free" to go where we please, free to fight not only against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh!

B. THE NEW ADVOCATES OF "FREEDOM OF CRITICISM"

Now, this slogan ("freedom of criticism") has in recent times been solemnly advanced by *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10), organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, not as a theoretical postulate, but as a political demand, as a reply to the question, "Is it possible to unite the Social-Democratic organisations operating abroad?": "For a durable unity, there must be freedom of criticism" (p. 36).

From this statement two definite conclusions follow: (1) that *Rabocheye Dyelo* has taken under its wing the opportunist trend in international Social-Democracy in general, and (2) that *Rabocheye Dyelo* demands freedom for opportunism in Russian Social-Democracy. Let us examine these conclusions.

Rabocheye Dyelo is "particularly" displeased with the "inclination of *Iskra* and *Zarya* to predict a rupture between the *Mountain* and the *Gironde* in international Social-Democracy".*

"Generally speaking," writes B. Krichevsky, editor of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, "this talk of the *Mountain* and the *Gironde* heard in the ranks of Social-Democracy represents a shallow historical analogy, a strange thing to come from the pen of a Marxist. The Mountain and the Gironde did not represent different temperaments, or intellectual trends, as the historians of social thought may think, but different classes or strata—the middle bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat, on the other. In the modern socialist movement, however, there is no conflict of class interests; the socialist movement in its entirety, in *all* of its diverse forms (Krichevsky's italics), including the most pronounced Bernsteinians, stands on the basis of the class interests of the proletariat and its class struggle for political and economic emancipation" (pp. 32-33).

---

* A comparison of the two trends within the revolutionary proletariat (the revolutionary and the opportunist), and the two trends within the revolutionary bourgeoisie in the eighteenth century (the Jacobin, known as the Mountain, and the Girondist) was made in the leading article in No. 2 of *Iskra* (February 1901). The article was written by Plekhanov. The Cadets,[143] the Bezzaglavtsi,[144] and the Mensheviks to this day love to refer to Jacobinism in Russian Social-Democracy. But how Plekhanov came to apply this concept for the first time against the Right wing of Social-Democracy—about this they prefer to keep silent or to forget. (Author's note to the 1907 edition—*Ed.*)

A bold assertion! Has not Krichevsky heard of the fact, long ago noted, that it is precisely the extensive participation of an "academic" *stratum* in the socialist movement in recent years that has promoted such a rapid spread of Bernsteinism? And what is most important—on what does our author found his opinion that even "the most pronounced Bernsteinians" stand on the basis of the class struggle for the political and economic emancipation of the proletariat? No one knows. This determined defence of the most pronounced Bernsteinians is not supported by any argument or reasoning whatever. Apparently, the author believes that if he repeats what the most pronounced Bernsteinians say about themselves his assertion requires no proof. But can anything more "shallow" be imagined than this judgement of an entire trend based on nothing more than what the representatives of that trend say about themselves? Can anything more shallow be imagined than the subsequent "homily" on the two different and even diametrically opposite types, or paths, of party development? (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, pp. 34-35.) The German Social-Democrats, in other words, recognise complete freedom of criticism, but the French do not, and it is precisely their example that demonstrates the "bane of intolerance".

To this we can only say that the very example B. Krichevsky affords us attests to the fact that the name Marxists is at times assumed by people who conceive history literally in the "Ilovaisky manner".[145] To explain the unity of the German Socialist Party and the disunity of the French Socialist Party, there is no need whatever to go into the special features in the history of these countries, to contrast the conditions of military semi-absolutism in the one with republican parliamentarism in the other, to analyse the effects of the Paris Commune and the effects of the Exceptional Law Against the Socialists, to compare the economic life and economic development of the two countries, or to recall that "the unexampled growth of German Social-Democracy" was accompanied by a strenuous struggle, unique in the history of socialism, not only against erroneous theories (Mühlberger, Dühring,* the *Katheder*-Socialists[146]),

* At the time Engels dealt his blows at Dühring, many representatives of German Social-Democracy inclined towards the latter's

but also against erroneous tactics (Lassalle), etc., etc. All that is superfluous! The French quarrel among themselves because they are intolerant; the Germans are united because they are good boys.

And observe, this piece of matchless profundity is designed to "refute" the fact that puts to rout the defence of the Bernsteinians. The question whether or not the Bernsteinians *stand* on the basis of the class struggle of the proletariat is one that can be completely and irrevocably answered only by historical experience. Consequently, the example of France holds greatest significance in this respect, because France is the only country in which the Bernsteinians attempted *to stand* independently, on their own feet, with the warm approval of their German colleagues (and partly also of the Russian opportunists; cf. *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 2-3, pp. 83-84). The reference to the "intolerance" of the French, apart from its "historical" significance (in the Nozdryov[147] sense), turns out to be merely an attempt to hush up very unpleasant facts with angry invectives.

Nor are we inclined to make a present of the Germans to Krichevsky and the numerous other champions of "freedom of criticism". If the "most pronounced Bernsteinians" are still tolerated in the ranks of the German party, it is only to the extent that they *submit* to the Hanover resolution,[148] which emphatically rejected Bernstein's "amendments", and to the Lübeck resolution, which (notwithstanding the diplomatic terms in which it is couched) contains a direct warning to Bernstein. It is debatable, from the

---

views, and accusations of acerbity, intolerance, uncomradely polemics, etc., were hurled at Engels even publicly at a Party Congress. At the Congress of 1877, Most, and his supporters, introduced a resolution to prohibit the publication of Engels's articles in *Vorwärts* because "they do not interest the overwhelming majority of the readers", and Vahlteich declared that their publication had caused great damage to the Party, that Dühring too had rendered services to Social-Democracy: "We must utilise everyone in the interests of the Party; let the professors engage in polemics if they care to do so, but *Vorwärts* is not the place in which to conduct them" (*Vorwärts*, No. 65, June 6, 1877). Here we have another example of the defence of "freedom of criticism", and our legal critics and illegal opportunists, who love so much to cite the example of the Germans, would do well to ponder it!

standpoint of the interests of the German party, whether diplomacy was appropriate and whether, in this case, a bad peace is better than a good quarrel; in short, opinions may differ as to the expediency of any one of the *methods* employed to reject Bernsteinism, but that the German party *did reject* Bernsteinism on two occasions, is a fact no one can fail to see. Therefore, to think that the German example confirms the thesis that "the most pronounced Bernsteinians stand on the basis of the class struggle of the proletariat, for political and economic emancipation", means to fail completely to understand what is going on under our very eyes.*

Nor is that all. As we have seen, *Rabocheye Dyelo* demands "freedom of criticism" and defends Bernsteinism before *Russian* Social-Democracy. Apparently it convinced itself that we were unfair to our "Critics" and Bernsteinians. But to which ones? who? where? when? What did the unfairness represent? About this, not a word. *Rabocheye Dyelo* does not name a single Russian Critic or Bernsteinian! We are left with but one of two possible suppositions. *Either* the unfairly treated party is none other than *Rabocheye Dyelo* itself (this is confirmed by the fact that in the two articles in No. 10 reference is made only to the wrongs suffered by *Rabocheye Dyelo* at the hands of *Zarya* and *Iskra*). If that

* It should be observed that *Rabocheye Dyelo* has always confined itself to a bare statement of facts concerning Bernsteinism in the German party and completely "refrained" from expressing its own opinion. See, for instance, the reports of the Stuttgart Congress[149] in No. 2-3 (p. 66), in which all the disagreements are reduced to "tactics" and the statement is merely made that the overwhelming majority remain true to the previous revolutionary tactics. Or, No. 4-5 (p. 25, et seq.), in which we have nothing but a paraphrasing of the speeches delivered at the Hanover Congress, with a reprint of Bebel's resolution. An exposition and a criticism of Bernstein's views are again put off (as was the case in No. 2-3) to be dealt with in a "special article". Curiously enough, in No. 4-5 (p. 33), we read the following: "... the views expounded by Bebel have the support of the vast majority of the Congress," and a few lines thereafter: "... David defended Bernstein's views.... First of all, he tried to show that ... Bernstein and his friends, after all is said and done [*sic*!], stand on the basis of the class struggle..." This was written in December 1899, and in September 1901 *Rabocheye Dyelo*, apparently no longer believing that Bebel was right, repeats David's views as, its own!

is the case, how is the strange fact to be explained that *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which always vehemently dissociated itself from all solidarity with Bernsteinism, could not defend itself without putting in a word in defence of the "most pronounced Bernsteinians" and of freedom of criticism? *Or* some third persons have been treated unfairly. If this is the case, then what reasons may there be for not naming them?

We see, therefore, that *Rabocheye Dyelo* is continuing to play the game of hide-and-seek it has played (as we shall show below) ever since its founding. And let us note further this *first* practical application of the vaunted "freedom of criticism". In actual fact, not only was it forthwith reduced to abstention from all criticism, but also to abstention from expressing independent views altogether. The very *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which avoids mentioning Russian Bernsteinism as if it were a shameful disease (to use Starover's[150] apt expression), proposes, for the treatment of this disease, *to copy word for word* the latest German prescription for the German variety of the malady! Instead of freedom of criticism—slavish (worse: apish) imitation! The very same social and political content of modern international opportunism reveals itself in a variety of ways according to national peculiarities. In one country the opportunists have long ago come out under a separate flag; in another, they have ignored theory and in fact pursued the policy of the Radicals-Socialists; in a third, some members of the revolutionary party have deserted to the camp of opportunism and strive to achieve their aims, not in open struggle for principles and for new tactics, but by gradual, imperceptible, and, if one may so put it, unpunishable corruption of their party; in a fourth country, similar deserters employ the same methods in the gloom of political slavery, and with a completely original combination of "legal" and "illegal" activity, etc. To talk of freedom of criticism and of Bernsteinism as a condition for uniting the *Russian* Social-Democrats and not to explain how *Russian* Bernsteinism has manifested itself and what particular fruits it has borne, amounts to talking with the aim of saying nothing.

Let us ourselves try, if only in a few words, to say what *Rabocheye Dyelo* did not want to say (or which was, perhaps, beyond its comprehension).

C. CRITICISM IN RUSSIA

The chief distinguishing feature of Russia in regard to the point we are examining is that *the very beginning* of the spontaneous working-class movement, on the one hand, and of the turn of progressive public opinion towards Marxism, on the other, was marked by the combination of manifestly heterogeneous elements under a common flag to fight the common enemy (the obsolete social and political world outlook). We refer to the heyday of "legal Marxism". Speaking generally, this was an altogether curious phenomenon that no one in the eighties or the beginning of the nineties would have believed possible. In a country ruled by an autocracy, with a completely enslaved press, in a period of desperate political reaction in which even the tiniest outgrowth of political discontent and protest is persecuted, the theory of revolutionary Marxism suddenly forces its way into the *censored* literature and, though expounded in Aesopian language, is understood by all the "interested". The government had accustomed itself to regarding only the theory of the (revolutionary) Narodnaya Volya as dangerous, without, as is usual, observing its internal evolution, and rejoicing at *any* criticism levelled against it. Quite a considerable time elapsed (by our Russian standards) before the government realised what had happened and the unwieldy army of censors and gendarmes discovered the new enemy and flung itself upon him. Meanwhile, Marxist books were published one after another, Marxist journals and newspapers were founded, nearly everyone became a Marxist, Marxists were flattered, Marxists were courted, and the book publishers rejoiced at the extraordinary, ready sale of Marxist literature. It was quite natural, therefore, that among the Marxian neophytes who were caught up in this atmosphere, there should be more than one "author who got a swelled head..."[151].

We can now speak calmly of this period as of an event of the past. It is no secret that the brief period in which Marxism blossomed on the surface of our literature was called forth by an alliance between people of extreme and of very moderate views. In point of fact, the latter were bourgeois democrats; this conclusion (so markedly confirmed by their

subsequent "critical" development) suggested itself to some even when the "alliance" was still intact.*

That being the case, are not the revolutionary Social-Democrats who entered into the alliance with the future "Critics" mainly responsible for the subsequent "confusion"? This question, together with a reply in the affirmative, is sometimes heard from people with too rigid a view. But such people are entirely in the wrong. Only those who are not sure of themselves can fear to enter into temporary alliances even with unreliable people; not a single political party could exist without such alliances. The combination with the legal Marxists was in its way the first really political alliance entered into by Russian Social-Democrats. Thanks to this alliance, an astonishingly rapid victory was obtained over Narodism, and Marxist ideas (even though in a vulgarised form) became very widespread. Moreover, the alliance was not concluded altogether without "conditions". Evidence of this is the burning by the censor, in 1895, of the Marxist collection *Material on the Question of the Economic Development of Russia*.[152] If the literary agreement with the legal Marxists can be compared with a political alliance, then that book can be compared with a political treaty.

The rupture, of course, did not occur because the "allies" proved to be bourgeois democrats. On the contrary, the representatives of the latter trend are natural and desirable allies of Social-Democracy insofar as its democratic tasks, brought to the fore by the prevailing situation in Russia, are concerned. But an essential condition for such an alliance must be the full opportunity for the socialists to reveal to the working class that its interests are diametrically opposed to the interests of the bourgeoisie. However, the Bernsteinian and "critical" trend, to which the majority of the legal Marxists turned, deprived the socialists of this opportunity and demoralised the socialist consciousness by vulgarising Marxism, by advocating the theory of the blunting of social contradictions, by declaring the idea of the

* The reference is to an article by K. Tulin directed against Struve. (See present edition, Vol. 1, pp. 333-507.—*Ed.*) The article was based on an essay entitled "The Reflection of Marxism in Bourgeois Literature". (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

social revolution and of the dictatorship of the proletariat to be absurd, by reducing the working-class movement and the class struggle to narrow trade-unionism and to a "realistic" struggle for petty, gradual reforms. This was synonymous with bourgeois democracy's denial of socialism's right to independence and, consequently, of its right to existence; in practice it meant a striving to convert the nascent working-class movement into an appendage of the liberals.

Naturally, under such circumstances the rupture was necessary. But the "peculiar" feature of Russia manifested itself in the fact that this rupture simply meant the elimination of the Social-Democrats from the most accessible and widespread "legal" literature. The "ex-Marxists", who took up the flag of "criticism" and who obtained almost a monopoly to "demolish" Marxism, entrenched themselves in this literature. Catchwords like "Against orthodoxy" and "Long live freedom of criticism" (now repeated by *Rabocheye Dyelo*) forthwith became the vogue, and the fact that neither the censor nor the gendarmes could resist this vogue is apparent from the publication of *three* Russian editions of the work of the celebrated Bernstein (celebrated in the Herostratean sense) and from the fact that the works of Bernstein, Mr. Prokopovich, and others were recommended by Zubatov (*Iskra*, No. 10). A task now devolved upon the Social-Democrats that was difficult in itself and was made incredibly more difficult by purely external obstacles—the task of combating the new trend. This trend did not confine itself to the sphere of literature. The turn towards "criticism" was accompanied by an infatuation for "Economism" among Social-Democratic practical workers.

The manner in which the connection between, and interdependence of, legal criticism and illegal Economism arose and grew is in itself an interesting subject, one that could serve as the theme of a special article. We need only note here that this connection undoubtedly existed. The notoriety deservedly acquired by the *Credo* was due precisely to the frankness with which it formulated this connection and blurted out the fundamental political tendency of "Economism"—let the workers carry on the economic struggle (it would be more correct to say the trade-unionist struggle,

because the latter also embraces specifically working-class politics) and let the Marxist intelligentsia merge with the liberals for the political "struggle". Thus, trade-unionist work "among the people" meant fulfilling the first part of this task, while legal criticism meant fulfilling the second. This statement was such an excellent weapon against Economism that, had there been no *Credo*, it would have been worth inventing one.

The *Credo* was not invented, but it was published without the consent and perhaps even against the will of its authors. At all events, the present writer, who took part in dragging this new "programme" into the light of day,* has heard complaints and reproaches to the effect that copies of the résumé of the speakers' views were distributed, dubbed the *Credo*, and even published in the press together with the protest! We refer to this episode because it reveals a very peculiar feature of our Economism—fear of publicity. This is a feature of Economism generally, and not of the authors of the *Credo* alone. It was revealed by that most outspoken and honest advocate of Economism, *Rabochaya Mysl*, and by *Rabocheye Dyelo* (which was indignant over the publication of "Economist" documents in the *Vademecum*[155]), as well as by the Kiev Committee, which two years ago refused to permit the publication of its *profession de foi*,** together with a repudiation of it,*** and by many other individual representatives of Economism.

This fear of criticism displayed by the advocates of freedom of criticism cannot be attributed solely to craftiness (although, on occasion, no doubt craftiness is brought into play: it would be improvident to expose the young and as

---

* The reference is to the *Protest of the Seventeen* against the *Credo*. The present writer took part in drawing up this protest (the end of 1899).[153] The protest and the *Credo* were published abroad in the spring of 1900. (See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 167-82.—*Ed.*) It is now known from the article written by Madame Kuskova (I think in *Byloye*[154]) that she was the author of the *Credo* and that Mr. Prokopovich was very prominent among the "Economists" abroad at the time. (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

** Confession of faith.[156]

*** As far as our information goes, the composition of the Kiev Committee has changed since then.

yet frail shoots of the new trend to attacks by opponents). No, the majority of the Economists look with sincere resentment (as by the very nature of Economism they must) upon all theoretical controversies, factional disagreements, broad political questions, plans for organising revolutionaries, etc. "Leave all that to the people abroad!" said a fairly consistent Economist to me one day, thereby expressing a very widespread (and again purely trade-unionist) view; our concern is the working-class movement, the workers, organisations here, in our localities; all the rest is merely the invention of doctrinaires, "the overrating of ideology", as the authors of the letter, published in *Iskra*, No. 12, expressed it, in unison with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10.

The question now arises: such being the peculiar features of Russian "criticism" and Russian Bernsteinism, what should have been the task of those who sought to oppose opportunism in deeds and not merely in words? First, they should have made efforts to resume the theoretical work that had barely begun in the period of legal Marxism and that fell anew on the shoulders of the comrades working underground. Without such work the successful growth of the movement was impossible. Secondly, they should have actively combated the legal "criticism" that was perverting people's minds on a considerable scale. Thirdly, they should have actively opposed confusion and vacillation in the practical movement, exposing and repudiating every conscious or unconscious attempt to degrade our programme and our tactics.

That *Rabocheye Dyelo* did none of these things is well known; we shall have occasion below to deal with this well-known fact in detail and from various aspects. At the moment, however, we desire merely to show the glaring contradiction that exists between the demand for "freedom of criticism" and the specific features of our native criticism and Russian Economism. It suffices but to glance at the text of the resolution in which the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad endorsed the point of view of *Rabocheye Dyelo*.

"In the interests of the further ideological development of Social-Democracy, we recognise the freedom of criticism of Social-Democratic theory in Party literature to be absolutely necessary insofar as the criticism does not run counter to the class and revolutionary character of this theory" (*Two Conferences*, p. 10).

And the motivation? The resolution "in its first part coincides with the resolution of the Lübeck Party Congress on Bernstein".... In the simplicity of their souls the "Unionists" failed to observe what a *testimonium paupertatis* (attestation of poverty) they betray with this copying.... "But ... in its second part, it restricts freedom of criticism much more than did the Lübeck Party Congress."

The resolution of the Union Abroad, then, is directed against the Russian Bernsteinians? If it is not, then the reference to Lübeck would be utterly absurd. But it is not true to say that it "restricts freedom of criticism". In adopting their Hanover resolution, the Germans, point by point, rejected *precisely* the amendments proposed by Bernstein, while in their Lübeck resolution they cautioned *Bernstein personally*, by naming him. Our "free" imitators, however, make *not a single allusion* to *a single* manifestation of specifically Russian "criticism" and Russian Economism. In view of this omission, the bare reference to the class and revolutionary character of the theory leaves far wider scope for misinterpretation, particularly when the Union Abroad refuses to identify "so-called Economism" with opportunism (*Two Conferences*, p. 8, Paragraph 1). But all this, in passing. The main thing to note is that the positions of the opportunists in relation to the revolutionary Social-Democrats in Russia are diametrically opposed to those in Germany. In that country, as we know, the revolutionary Social-Democrats are in favour of preserving that which exists—the old programme and the tactics, which are universally known and have been elucidated in all their details by many decades of experience. But the "Critics" desire to introduce changes, and since these Critics represent an insignificant minority, and since they are very timid in their revisionist efforts, one can understand the motives of the majority in confining themselves to the dry rejection of "innovations". In Russia, however, it is the Critics and the Economists who are in favour of preserving that which exists: the "Critics" want us to go on regarding them as Marxists and to guarantee them the "freedom of criticism" they enjoyed to the full (for, in fact, they never recognised any kind of *party* ties,* and, more-

* The fact alone of the absence of public party ties and party traditions, representing as it does a cardinal difference between Rus-

over, we never had a generally recognised party body that could "restrict" freedom of criticism, if only by counsel); the Economists want the revolutionaries to recognise the sovereign character of the present movement" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 25), i.e., to recognise the "legitimacy" of that which exists; they want the "ideologists" not to try to "divert" the movement from the path that "is determined by the interaction of material elements and material environment" ("Letter" in *Iskra*, No. 12); they want to have that struggle recognised as desirable "which it is possible for the workers to wage under the present conditions", and as the only possible struggle, that "which they are actually waging at the present time" ("*Separate Supplement" to Rabochaya Mysl*, p. 14). We revolutionary Social-Democrats, on the contrary, are dissatisfied with this worship of spontaneity, i.e., of that which exists "at the present moment". We demand that the tactics that have prevailed in recent years be changed; we declare that "before we can unite, and in order that we may unite, we must first of all draw firm and definite lines of demarcation" (see announcement of the publication of *Iskra*).* In a word, the Germans stand for that which exists and reject changes; we demand a change of that which exists, and reject subservience thereto and reconciliation to it.

This "slight" difference our "free" copyists of German resolutions failed to notice.

---

sia and Germany, should have warned all sensible socialists against blind imitation. But here is an instance of the lengths to which "freedom of criticism" goes in Russia. Mr. Bulgakov, the Russian Critic, utters the following reprimand to the Austrian Critic, Hertz: "Notwithstanding the independence of his conclusions, Hertz on this point [on the question of co-operative societies] apparently remains excessively bound by the opinions of his party, and although he disagrees with it in details, he dare not reject the common principle" (*Capitalism and Agriculture*, Vol. II, p. 287). The subject of a politically enslaved state, in which nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand of the population are corrupted to the marrow by political subservience and completely lack the conception of party honour and party ties, superciliously reproves a citizen of a constitutional state for being excessively "bound by the opinions of his party"! Our illegal organisations have nothing else to do, of course, but draw up resolutions on freedom of criticism....

* See present edition, Vol. 4, p. 354.—*Ed.*

D. ENGELS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE THEORETICAL STRUGGLE

"Dogmatism, doctrinairism", "ossification of the party—the inevitable retribution that follows the violent strait-lacing of thought"—these are the enemies against which the knightly champions of "freedom of criticism" in *Rabocheye Dyelo* rise up in arms. We are very glad that this question has been placed on the order of the day and we would only propose to add to it one other:

And who are the judges?

We have before us two publishers' announcements. One, "The Programme of the Periodical Organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad—*Rabocheye Dyelo*" (reprint from No. 1 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*), and the other, the "Announcement of the Resumption of the Publications of the Emancipation of Labour Group". Both are dated 1899, when the "crisis of Marxism" had long been under discussion. And what do we find? We would seek in vain in the first announcement for any reference to this phenomenon, or a definite statement of the position the new organ intends to adopt on this question. Not a word is said about theoretical work and the urgent tasks that now confront it, either in this programme or in the supplements to it that were adopted by the Third Congress of the Union Abroad in 1901 (*Two Conferences*, pp. 5-18). During this entire time the Editorial Board of *Rabocheye Dyelo* ignored theoretical questions, in spite of the fact that these were questions that disturbed the minds of all Social-Democrats the world over.

The other announcement, on the contrary, points first of all to the declining interest in theory in recent years, imperatively demands "vigilant attention to the theoretical aspect of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat", and calls for "ruthless criticism of the Bernsteinian and other anti-revolutionary tendencies" in our movement. The issues of *Zarya* to date show how this programme has been carried out.

Thus, we see that high-sounding phrases against the ossification of thought, etc., conceal unconcern and helplessness with regard to the development of theoretical thought. The case of the Russian Social-Democrats manifestly illus-

trates the general European phenomenon (long ago noted also by the German Marxists) that the much vaunted freedom of criticism does not imply substitution of one theory for another, but freedom from all integral and pondered theory; it implies eclecticism and lack of principle. Those who have the slightest acquaintance with the actual state of our movement cannot but see that the wide spread of Marxism was accompanied by a certain lowering of the theoretical level. Quite a number of people with very little, and even a total lack of theoretical training joined the movement because of its practical significance and its practical successes. We can judge from that how tactless *Rabocheye Dyelo* is when, with an air of triumph, it quotes Marx's statement: "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes."[157] To repeat these words in a period of theoretical disorder is like wishing mourners at a funeral many happy returns of the day. Moreover, these words of Marx are taken from his letter on the Gotha Programme,[158] in which he *sharply condemns* eclecticism in the formulation of principles. If you must unite, Marx wrote to the party leaders, then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not allow any bargaining over principles, do not make theoretical "concessions". This was Marx's idea, and yet there are people among us who seek—in his name—to belittle the significance of theory!

Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This idea cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity. Yet, for Russian Social-Democrats the importance of theory is enhanced by three other circumstances, which are often forgotten: first, by the fact that our Party is only in process of formation, its features are only just becoming defined, and it has as yet far from settled accounts with the other trends of revolutionary thought that threaten to divert the movement from the correct path. On the contrary, precisely the very recent past was marked by a revival of non-Social-Democratic revolutionary trends (an eventuation regarding which Axelrod long ago warned the Economists). Under these circumstances, what at first sight appears to be an "unimportant" error may lead to

most deplorable consequences, and only short-sighted people can consider factional disputes and a strict differentiation between shades of opinion inopportune or superfluous. The fate of Russian Social-Democracy for very many years to come may depend on the strengthening of one or the other "shade".

Secondly, the Social-Democratic movement is in its very essence an international movement. This means, not only that we must combat national chauvinism, but that an incipient movement in a young country can be successful only if it makes use of the experiences of other countries. In order to make use of these experiences it is not enough merely to be acquainted with them, or simply to copy out the latest resolutions. What is required is the ability to treat these experiences critically and to test them independently. He who realises how enormously the modern working-class movement has grown and branched out will understand what a reserve of theoretical forces and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is required to carry out this task.

Thirdly, the national tasks of Russian Social-Democracy are such as have never confronted any other socialist party in the world. We shall have occasion further on to deal with the political and organisational duties which the task of emancipating the whole people from the yoke of autocracy imposes upon us. At this point, we wish to state only that the *role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory*. To have a concrete understanding of what this means, let the reader recall such predecessors of Russian Social-Democracy as Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, and the brilliant galaxy of revolutionaries of the seventies; let him ponder over the world significance which Russian literature is now acquiring; let him ... but be that enough!

Let us quote what Engels said in 1874 concerning the significance of theory in the Social-Democratic movement. Engels recognises, *not two* forms of the great struggle of Social-Democracy (political and economic), as is the fashion among us, *but three*, *placing the theoretical struggle on a par with the first two*. His recommendations to the German working-class movement, which had become strong, practically and politically, are so instructive from the standpoint

of present-day problems and controversies, that we hope the reader will not be vexed with us for quoting a long passage from his prefatory note to *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg*,* which has long become a great bibliographical rarity:

"The German workers have two important advantages over those of the rest of Europe. First, they belong to the most theoretical people of Europe; and they have retained that sense of theory which the so-called 'educated' classes of Germany have almost completely lost. Without German philosophy, which preceded it, particularly that of Hegel, German scientific socialism—the only scientific socialism that has ever existed—would never have come into being. Without a sense of theory among the workers, this scientific socialism would never have entered their flesh and blood as much as is the case. What an immeasurable advantage this is may be seen, on the one hand, from the indifference towards all theory, which is one of the main reasons why the English working-class movement crawls along so slowly in spite of the splendid organisation of the individual unions; on the other hand, from the mischief and confusion wrought by Proudhonism, in its original form, among the French and Belgians, and, in the form further caricatured by Bakunin, among the Spaniards and Italians.

"The second advantage is that, chronologically speaking, the Germans were about the last to come into the workers' movement. Just as German theoretical socialism will never forget that it rests on the shoulders of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen—three men who, in spite of all their fantastic notions and all their utopianism, have their place among the most eminent thinkers of all times, and whose genius anticipated innumerable things, the correctness of which is now being scientifically proved by us—so the practical workers' movement in Germany ought never to forget that it has developed on the shoulders of the English and French movements, that it was able simply to utilise their dearly bought experience, and could now avoid their mistakes, which in their time were mostly unavoidable. Without the precedent of the English trade unions and French workers'

* Dritter Abdruck, Leipzig, 1875. Verlag der Genossenschaftsbuchdruckerei. (*The Peasant War in Germany*. Third impression. Co-operative Publishers, Leipzig, 1875.—*Ed.*)

FROM MARX TO MAO
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

political struggles, without the gigantic impulse given especially by the Paris Commune, where would we be now?

"It must be said to the credit of the German workers that they have exploited the advantages of their situation with rare understanding. For the first time since a workers' movement has existed, the struggle is being conducted pursuant to its three sides—the theoretical, the political, and the practical-economic (resistance to the capitalists)—in harmony and in its interconnections, and in a systematic way. It is precisely in this, as it were, concentric attack, that the strength and invincibility of the German movement lies.

"Due to this advantageous situation, on the one hand, and to the insular peculiarities of the English and the forcible suppression of the French movement, on the other, the German workers have for the moment been placed in the vanguard of the proletarian struggle. How long events will allow them to occupy this post of honour cannot be foretold. But let us hope that as long as they occupy it, they will fill it fittingly. This demands redoubled efforts in every field of struggle and agitation. In particular, it will be the duty of the leaders to gain an ever clearer insight into all theoretical questions, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases inherited from the old world outlook, and constantly to keep in mind that socialism, since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science, i.e., that it be studied. The task will be to spread with increased zeal among the masses of the workers the ever more clarified understanding thus acquired, to knit together ever more firmly the organisation both of the party and of the trade unions....

"If the German workers progress in this way, they will not be marching exactly at the head of the movement—it is not at all in the interest of this movement that the workers of any particular country should march at its head—but they will occupy an honourable place in the battle line; and they will stand armed for battle when either unexpectedly grave trials or momentous events demand of them increased courage, increased determination and energy."[159]

Engels's words proved prophetic. Within a few years the German workers were subjected to unexpectedly grave trials in the form of the Exceptional Law Against the Socialists.

And they met those trials armed for battle and succeeded in emerging from them victorious.

The Russian proletariat will have to undergo trials immeasurably graver; it will have to fight a monster compared with which an anti-socialist law in a constitutional country seems but a dwarf. History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks confronting the proletariat of any country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. And we have the right to count upon acquiring this honourable title, already earned by our predecessors, the revolutionaries of the seventies, if we succeed in inspiring our movement, which is a thousand times broader and deeper, with the same devoted determination and vigour.

II

THE SPONTANEITY OF THE MASSES AND THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

We have said that our movement, much more extensive and deep than the movement of the seventies, must be inspired with the same devoted determination and energy that inspired the movement at that time. Indeed, no one, we think, has until now doubted that the strength of the present-day movement lies in the awakening of the masses (principally, the industrial proletariat) and that its weakness lies in the lack of consciousness and initiative among the revolutionary leaders.

However, of late a staggering discovery has been made, which threatens to disestablish all hitherto prevailing views on this question. This discovery was made by *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which in its polemic with *Iskra* and *Zarya* did not confine itself to making objections on separate points, but tried to ascribe "general disagreements" to a more profound cause—to the "different appraisals of the *relative* importance of the spontaneous and consciously 'methodical' ele-

ment". *Rabocheye Dyelo* formulated its indictment as a "*belittling of the significance of the objective or the spontaneous element of development*".* To this we say: Had the polemics with *Iskra* and *Zarya* resulted in nothing more than causing *Rabocheye Dyelo* to hit upon these "general disagreements", that alone would give us considerable satisfaction, so significant is this thesis and so clear is the light it sheds on the quintessence of the present-day theoretical and political differences that exist among Russian Social-Democrats.

For this reason the question of the relation between consciousness and spontaneity is of such enormous general interest, and for this reason the question must be dealt with in great detail.

A. THE BEGINNING OF THE SPONTANEOUS UPSURGE

In the previous chapter we pointed out how *universally* absorbed the educated youth of Russia was in the theories of Marxism in the middle of the nineties. In the same period the strikes that followed the famous St. Petersburg industrial war of 1896 assumed a similar general character. Their spread over the whole of Russia clearly showed the depth of the newly awakening popular movement, and if we are to speak of the "spontaneous element" then, of course, it is this strike movement which, first and foremost, must be regarded as spontaneous. But there is spontaneity and spontaneity. Strikes occurred in Russia in the seventies and sixties (and even in the first half of the nineteenth century), and they were accompanied by the "spontaneous" destruction of machinery, etc. Compared with these "revolts", the strikes of the nineties might even be described as "conscious", to such an extent do they mark the progress which the working-class movement made in that period. This shows that the "spontaneous element", in essence, represents nothing more nor less than consciousness in an *embryonic form*. Even the primitive revolts expressed the awakening of consciousness to a certain extent. The workers were losing their age-long faith in the permanence of the system which oppressed them and began... I shall not say to understand, but to sense

* *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, September 1901, pp. 17-18. *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s italics.

the necessity for collective resistance, definitely abandoning their slavish submission to the authorities. But this was, nevertheless, more in the nature of outbursts of desperation and vengeance than of *struggle*. The strikes of the nineties revealed far greater flashes of consciousness; definite demands were advanced, the strike was carefully timed, known cases and instances in other places were discussed, etc. The revolts were simply the resistance of the oppressed, whereas the systematic strikes represented the class struggle in embryo, but only in embryo. Taken by themselves, these strikes were simply trade union struggles, not yet Social-Democratic struggles. They marked the awakening antagonisms between workers and employers; but the workers, were not, and could not be, conscious of the irreconcilable antagonism of their interests to the whole of the modern political and social system, i.e., theirs was not yet Social-Democratic consciousness. In this sense, the strikes of the nineties, despite the enormous progress they represented as compared with the "revolts", remained a purely spontaneous movement.

We have said that *there could not have been* Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers. It would have to be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness, i.e., the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc.* The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the philosophic, historical, and economic theories elaborated by educated representatives of the propertied classes, by intellectuals. By their social status the founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia. In the very same way, in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of Social-Democracy arose altogether independently of the spontaneous growth of the working-class movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of

* Trade-unionism does not exclude "politics" altogether, as some imagine. Trade unions have always conducted some political (but not Social-Democratic) agitation and struggle. We shall deal with the difference between trade-union politics and Social-Democratic politics in the next chapter.

thought among the revolutionary socialist intelligentsia. In the period under discussion, the middle nineties, this doctrine not only represented the completely formulated programme of the Emancipation of Labour group, but had already won over to its side the majority of the revolutionary youth in Russia.

Hence, we had both the spontaneous awakening of the working masses, their awakening to conscious life and conscious struggle, and a revolutionary youth, armed with Social-Democratic theory and straining towards the workers. In this connection it is particularly important to state the oft-forgotten (and comparatively little-known) fact that, although the *early* Social-Democrats of that period *zealously carried on economic agitation* (being guided in this activity by the truly useful indications contained in the pamphlet *On Agitation*,[160] then still in manuscript), they did not regard this as their sole task. On the contrary, *from the very beginning* they set for Russian Social-Democracy the most far-reaching historical tasks, in general, and the task of overthrowing the autocracy, in particular. Thus, towards the end of 1895, the St. Petersburg group of Social-Democrats, which founded the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, prepared the first issue of a newspaper called *Rabocheye Dyelo*. This issue was ready to go to press when it was seized by the gendarmes, on the night of December 8, 1895, in a raid on the house of one of the members of the group, Anatoly Alexeyevich Vaneyev,* so that the first edition of *Rabocheye Dyelo* was not destined to see the light of day. The leading article in this issue (which perhaps thirty years hence some *Russkaya Starina*[161] will unearth in the archives of the Department of Police) outlined the historical tasks of the working class in Russia and placed the achievement of political liberty at their head. The issue also contained an article entitled "What Are Our Ministers Thinking About?"** which dealt with the crushing of the

* A. A. Vaneyev died in Eastern Siberia in 1899 from consumption, which he contracted during solitary confinement in prison prior to his banishment. That is why we considered it possible to publish the above information, the authenticity of which we guarantee, for it comes from persons who were closely and directly acquainted with A. A. Vaneyev.

** See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 87-92.—*Ed.*

elementary education committees by the police. In addition, there was some correspondence from St. Petersburg, and from other parts of Russia (e.g., a letter on the massacre of the workers in Yaroslavl Gubernia). This, "first effort", if we are not mistaken, of the Russian Social-Democrats of the nineties was not a purely local, or less still, "Economic", newspaper, but one that aimed to unite the strike movement with the revolutionary movement against the autocracy, and to win over to the side of Social-Democracy all who were oppressed by the policy of reactionary obscurantism. No one in the slightest degree acquainted with the state of the movement at that period could doubt that such a paper would have met with warm response among the workers of the capital and the revolutionary intelligentsia and would have had a wide circulation. The failure of the enterprise merely showed that the Social-Democrats of that period were unable to meet the immediate requirements of the time owing to their lack of revolutionary experience and practical training. This must be said, too, with regard to the *S. Peterburgsky Rabochy Listok*[162] and particularly with regard to *Rabochaya Gazeta* and the *Manifesto* of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, founded in the spring of 1898. Of course, we would not dream of blaming the Social-Democrats of that time for this unpreparedness. But in order to profit from the experience of that movement, and to draw practical lessons from it, we must thoroughly understand the causes and significance of this or that shortcoming. It is therefore highly important to establish the fact that a part (perhaps even a majority) of the Social-Democrats, active in the period of 1895-98, justly considered it possible even then, at the very beginning of the "spontaneous" movement, to come forward with a most extensive programme and a militant tactical line.* Lack of training of the majority of the revolu-

* "In adopting a hostile attitude towards the activities of the Social-Democrats of the late nineties, *Iskra* ignores the absence at that time of conditions for any work other than the struggle for petty demands," declare the Economists in their "Letter to Russian Social-Democratic Organs" (*Iskra*, No. 12). The facts given above show that the assertion about "absence of conditions" *is diametrically opposed to the truth*. Not only at the end, but even in the mid-nineties, all the conditions existed for *other* work, besides the struggle for petty demands—all the conditions except adequate training of leaders. Instead

tionaries, an entirely natural phenomenon, could not have roused any particular fears. Once the tasks were correctly defined, once the energy existed for repeated attempts to fulfil them, temporary failures represented only part misfortune. Revolutionary experience and organisational skill are things that can be acquired, provided the desire is there to acquire them, provided the shortcomings are recognised, which in revolutionary activity is more than half-way towards their removal.

But what was only part misfortune became full misfortune when this consciousness began to grow dim (it was very much alive among the members of the groups mentioned), when there appeared people—and even Social -Democratic organs—that were prepared to regard shortcomings as virtues, that even tried to invent a *theoretical* basis for their *slavish cringing before spontaneity*. It is time to draw conclusions from this trend, the content of which is incorrectly and too narrowly characterised as "Economism".

B. BOWING TO SPONTANEITY. *RABOCHAYA MYSL*

Before dealing with the literary manifestation of this subservience to spontaneity, we should like to note the following characteristic fact (communicated to us from the above-mentioned source), which throws light on the conditions in which the two future conflicting trends in Russian Social-Democracy arose and grew among the comrades working in St. Petersburg. In the beginning of 1897, just prior to their banishment, A. A. Vaneyev and several of his comrades attended a private meeting[163] at which "old" and "young" members of the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class gathered. The conversation centred chiefly about the question of organisation, particularly about the "rules for the workers' mutual benefit fund", which, in

of frankly admitting that we, the ideologists, the leaders, lacked sufficient training—the "Economists" seek to shift the blame entirely upon the "absence of conditions", upon the effect of material environment that determines the road from which no ideologist will be able to divert the movement. What is this but slavish cringing before spontaneity, what but the infatuation of the "ideologists" with their own shortcomings?

their final form, were published in "*Listok*" *Rabotnika*,[164] No. 9-10, p. 46. Sharp differences immediately showed themselves between the "old" members ("Decembrists", as the St. Petersburg Social-Democrats jestingly called them) and several of the "young" members (who subsequently took an active part in the work of *Rabochaya Mysl*), with a heated discussion ensuing. The "young" members defended the main principles of the rules in the form in which they were published. The "old" members contended that the prime necessity was not this, but the consolidation of the League of Struggle into an organisation of revolutionaries to which all the various workers' mutual benefit funds, students' propaganda circles, etc., should be subordinated. It goes without saying that the disputing sides far from realised at the time that these disagreements were the beginning of a cleavage; on the contrary, they regarded them as something isolated and casual. But this fact shows that in Russia, too, "Economism" did not arise and spread without a struggle against the "old" Social-Democrats (which the Economists of today are apt to forget). And if, in the main, this struggle has not left "documentary" traces behind it, it is *solely* because the membership of the circles then functioning underwent such constant change that no continuity was established and, consequently, differences in point of view were not recorded in any documents.

The founding of *Rabochaya Mysl* brought Economism to the light of day, but not at one stroke. We must picture to ourselves concretely the conditions for activity and the short-lived character of the majority of the Russian study circles (a thing that is possible only for those who have themselves experienced it) in order to understand how much there was of the fortuitous in the successes and failures of the new trend in various towns, and the length of time during which neither the advocates nor the opponents of the "new" could make up their minds—and literally had no opportunity of so doing—as to whether this really expressed a distinct trend or merely the lack of training of certain individuals. For example, the first mimeographed copies of *Rabochaya Mysl* never reached the great majority of Social-Democrats, and if we are able to refer to the leading article in the first number, it is only because it was reproduced in an

article by V. I.[165] ("*Listok*" *Rabotnika*, No. 9-10, p. 47, et seq.), who, of course, did not fail to extol with more zeal than reason the new paper, which was so different from the papers and projects for papers mentioned above.* It is well worth dwelling on this leading article because it brings out in bold relief *the entire spirit of Rabochaya Mysl* and Economism generally.

After stating that the arm of the "blue-coats"** could never halt the progress of the working-class movement, the leading article goes on to say: "... The virility of the working-class movement is due to the fact that the workers themselves are at last taking their fate into their own hands, and out of the hands of the leaders"; this fundamental thesis is then developed in greater detail. Actually, the leaders (i.e., the Social-Democrats, the organisers of the League of Struggle) were, one might say, torn out of the hands of the workers*** by the police; yet it is made to appear that the workers were fighting against the leaders and liberated themselves from their yoke! Instead of sounding the call to go forward towards the consolidation of the revolutionary organisation and the expansion of political activity, the call was issued for a *retreat* to the purely trade-union struggle. It was announced that "the economic basis of the movement is eclipsed by the effort never to forget the political ideal", and that the watchword for the working-class movement was "Struggle for economic conditions" (!) or, better still, "The workers for the workers". It was declared that strike funds "are more valuable to the movement than a hundred other organisations" (compare this statement made in October 1897, with the

* It should be stated in passing that the praise of *Rabochaya Mysl* in November 1898, when Economism had become fully defined, especially abroad, emanated from the selfsame V. I, who very soon after became one of the editors of *Rabocheye Dyelo*. And yet *Rabocheye Dyelo* denied that there were two trends in Russian Social-Democracy, and continues to deny it to this day!

** The tsarist gendarmes wore blue uniforms.—*Tr.*

*** That this simile is a correct one is shown by the following characteristic fact. When, after the arrest of the "Decembrists", the news spread among the workers of the Schlüsselburg Highway that the discovery and arrest were facilitated by an *agent-provocateur*, N. N. Mikhailov, a dentist, who had been in contact with a group associated with the "Decembrists", the workers were so enraged that they decided to kill him.

polemic between the "Decembrists" and the young members in the beginning of 1897), etc. Catchwords like "We must concentrate, not on the 'cream' of the workers, but on the 'average', mass worker"; "Politics always obediently follows economics",* etc., etc., became the fashion, exercising an irresistible influence upon the masses of the youth who were attracted to the movement but who, in the majority of cases, were acquainted only with such fragments of Marxism as were expounded in legally appearing publications.

Political consciousness was completely overwhelmed by spontaneity—the spontaneity of the "Social-Democrats" who repeated Mr. V. V.'s "ideas", the spontaneity of those workers who were carried away by the arguments that a kopek added to a ruble was worth more than any socialism or politics, and that they must "fight, knowing that they are fighting, not for the sake of some future generation, but for themselves and their children" (leader in *Rabochaya Mysl*, No. 1). Phrases like these have always been a favourite weapon of the West-European bourgeois, who, in their hatred for socialism, strove (like the German "*Sozial-Politiker*" Hirsch) to transplant English trade-unionism to their native soil and to preach to the workers that by engaging in the purely trade-union struggle** they would be fighting for themselves and for their children, and not for some future generations with some future socialism. And now the "V. V.'s of Russian Social-Democracy" have set about repeating these bourgeois phrases. It is important at this point to note three circumstances that will be useful to our further analysis of *contemporary* differences.***

---

* These quotations are taken from the same leading article in the first number of *Rabochaya Mysl*. One can judge from this the degree of theoretical training possessed by these "V. V.'s of Russian Social-Democracy",[166] who kept repeating the crude vulgarisation of "economic materialism" at a time when the Marxists were carrying on a literary war against the real Mr. V. V., who had long ago been dubbed "a past master of reactionary deeds" for holding *similar* views on the relations between politics and economics!

** The Germans even have a special expression, *Nur-Gewerkschaftler*, which means an advocate of the "pure trade-union" struggle.

*** We emphasise the word *contemporary* for the benefit of those who may pharisaically shrug their shoulders and say: It is easy enough to attack *Rabochaya Mysl* now, but is not all this ancient history? *Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur* (change the name and the tale is

In the first place, the overwhelming of political consciousness by spontaneity, to which we referred above, also took place *spontaneously*. This may sound like a pun, but, alas, it is the bitter truth. It did not take place as a result of an open struggle between two diametrically opposed points of view, in which one triumphed over the other; it occurred because of the fact that an increasing number of "old" revolutionaries were "torn away" by the gendarmes and increasing numbers of "young" "V. V.'s of Russian Social- Democracy" appeared on the scene. Everyone, who has, I shall not say participated in, but at least breathed the atmosphere of, the *present-day* Russian movement, knows perfectly well that this is precisely the case. And if, nevertheless, we insist strongly that the reader be fully clear on this generally known fact, if we cite, for explicitness, as it were, the facts of the first edition of *Rabocheye Dyelo* and of the polemic between the "old" and the "young" at the beginning of 1897, we do this because the people who vaunt their "democracy" speculate on the ignorance of these facts on the part of the broad public (or of the very young generation). We shall return to this point further on.

Secondly, in the very first literary expression of Economism we observe the exceedingly curious phenomenon—highly characteristic for an understanding of all the differences prevailing among present-day Social-Democrats—that the adherents of the "labour movement pure and simple", worshippers of the closest "organic" contacts (*Rabocheye Dyelo*'s term) with the proletarian struggle, opponents of any non-worker intelligentsia (even a socialist intelligentsia), are compelled, in order to defend their positions, to resort to the arguments of the *bourgeois* "pure trade-unionists". This shows that from the very outset *Rabochaya Mysl* began—unconsciously—to implement the programme of the *Credo*. This shows (something *Rabocheye Dyelo* cannot grasp) that *all* worship of the spontaneity of the working-class movement, all belittling of the role of "the conscious element", of the role of Social-Democracy, *means*, *quite independently of whether he who belittles that role desires it or not*, *a strength-*

---

about you.—*Ed*.) is our answer to such contemporary Pharisees, whose complete subjection to the ideas of *Rabochaya Mysl* will be *proved* further on.

ening of the influence of bourgeois ideology upon the workers. All those who talk about "overrating the importance of ideology",* about exaggerating the role of the conscious element,** etc., imagine that the labour movement pure and simple can elaborate, and will elaborate, an independent ideology for itself, if only the workers "wrest their fate from the hands of the leaders". But this is a profound mistake. To supplement what has been said above, we shall quote the following profoundly true and important words of Karl Kautsky on the new draft programme of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party:***

"Many of our revisionist critics believe that Marx asserted that economic development and the class struggle create, not only the conditions for socialist production, but also, and directly, the *consciousness* [K. K.'s italics] of its necessity. And these critics assert that England, the country most highly developed capitalistically, is more remote than any other from this consciousness. Judging by the draft, one might assume that this allegedly orthodox-Marxist view, which is thus refuted, was shared by the committee that drafted the Austrian programme. In the draft programme it is stated: 'The more capitalist development increases the numbers of the proletariat, the more the proletariat is compelled and becomes fit to fight against capitalism. The proletariat becomes conscious' of the possibility and of the necessity for socialism.' In this connection socialist consciousness appears to be a necessary and direct result of the proletarian class struggle. But this is absolutely untrue. Of course, socialism, as a doctrine, has its roots in modern economic relationships just as the class struggle of the proletariat has, and, like the latter, emerges from the struggle against the capitalist-created poverty and misery of the masses. But socialism and the class struggle arise side by side and not one out of the other; each arises under different conditions. Modern socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of profound scientific knowledge. Indeed, modern economic science is as much a condition for socialist production as, say, modern technology, and the proletariat can create neither the one nor the other, no matter how much it may desire to do so; both arise out of the modern social process. The vehicle of science is not the proletariat, but the *bourgeois intelligentsia* [K. K.'s italics]: it was in the minds of individual members of this stratum that modern socialism originated, and it was they who communicated it to the more intellectually developed proletarians who, in their turn, introduce it into the proletarian class

* Letter of the "Economists", in *Iskra*, No. 12.

** *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10.

*** *Neue Zeit*, 1901-02, XX, I, No. 3, p. 79. The committee's draft to which Kautsky refers was adopted by the Vienna Congress (at the end of last year) in a slightly amended form.

struggle where conditions allow that to be done. Thus, socialist consciousness is something introduced into the proletarian class struggle from without [*von Aussen Hineingetragenes*] and not something that arose within it spontaneously [*urwüchsig*]. Accordingly, the old Hainfeld programme quite rightly stated that the task of Social-Democracy is to imbue the proletariat [literally: saturate the proletariat] with the *consciousness* of its position and the consciousness of its task. There would be no need for this if consciousness arose of itself from the class struggle. The new draft copied this proposition from the old programme, and attached it to the proposition mentioned above. But this completely broke the line of thought...."

Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology formulated by the working masses themselves in the process of their movement,* the *only* choice is—either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a "third" ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can never be a non-class or an above-class ideology). Hence, to belittle the socialist ideology *in any way*, *to turn aside from it in the slightest degree* means to strengthen bourgeois ideology. There is much talk of spontaneity. But the *spontaneous* development of the working-class movement leads to its subordination to bourgeois ideology, *to its development along the lines of the Credo programme*; for the spontaneous working-class movement is trade-unionism, is *Nur-Gewerkschaftlerei*, and trade-unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers by the bourgeoisie. Hence, our task, the task of Social-Democracy, is *to combat spontaneity*, *to divert* the working-class movement from this spontaneous, trade-unionist striving to

* This does not mean, of course, that the workers have no part in creating such an ideology. They take part, however, not as workers, but as socialist theoreticians, as Proudhons and Weitlings; in other words, they take part only when they are able, and to the extent that they are able, more or less, to acquire the knowledge of their age and develop that knowledge. But in order that working men *may succeed in this more often*, every effort must be made to raise the level of the consciousness of the workers in general; it is necessary that the workers do not confine themselves to the artificially restricted limits of "*literature for workers*" but that they learn to an increasing degree to master *general literature*. It would be even truer to say "are not confined", instead of "do not confine themselves", because the workers themselves wish to read and do read all that is written for the intelligentsia, and only a few (bad) intellectuals believe that it is enough "for workers" to be told a few things about factory conditions and to have repeated to them over and over again what has long been known.

come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, and to bring it under the wing of revolutionary Social-Democracy. The sentence employed by the authors of the "Economist" letter published in *Iskra*, No. 12, that the efforts of the most inspired ideologists fail to divert the working-class movement from the path that is determined by the interaction of the material elements and the material environment is therefore *tantamount to renouncing socialism*. If these authors were capable of fearlessly, consistently, and thoroughly considering what they say, as everyone who enters the arena of literary and public activity should be, there would be nothing left for them but to "fold their useless arms over their empty breasts" and surrender the field of action to the Struves and Prokopoviches, who are dragging the working-class movement "along the line of least resistance", i.e., along the line of bourgeois trade-unionism, or to the Zubatovs, who are dragging it along the line of clerical and gendarme "ideology".

Let us recall the example of Germany. What was the historic service Lassalle rendered to the German working-class movement? It was that he *diverted* that movement from the path of progressionist trade-unionism and co-operativism towards which it had been spontaneously moving (*with the benign assistance of Schulze-Delitzsch and his like*). To fulfil such a task it was necessary to do something quite different from talking of underrating the spontaneous element, of tactics-as-process, of the interaction between elements and environment, etc. *A fierce struggle against spontaneity* was necessary, and only after such a struggle, extending over many years, was it possible, for instance, to convert the working population of Berlin from a bulwark of the progressionist party into one of the finest strongholds of Social-Democracy. This struggle is by no means over even today (as might seem to those who learn the history of the German movement from Prokopovich, and its philosophy from Struve). Even now the German working class is, so to speak, split up among a number of ideologies. A section of the workers is organised in Catholic and monarchist trade unions; another section is organised in the Hirsch-Duncker unions,[167] founded by the bourgeois worshippers of English trade-unionism; the third is organised in Social-Democratic trade unions. The last-named group is immeasurably more numerous than the rest,

but the Social-Democratic ideology was able to achieve this superiority, and will be able to maintain it, only in an unswerving struggle against all other ideologies.

But why, the reader will ask, does the spontaneous movement, the movement along the line of least resistance, lead to the domination of bourgeois ideology? For the simple reason that bourgeois ideology is far older in origin than socialist ideology, that it is more fully developed, and that it has at its disposal *immeasurably* more means of dissemination.* And the younger the socialist movement in any given country, the more vigorously it must struggle against all attempts to entrench non-socialist ideology, and the more resolutely the workers must be warned against the bad counsellors who shout against "overrating the conscious element", etc. The authors of the Economist letter, in unison with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, inveigh against the intolerance that is characteristic of the infancy of the movement. To this we reply: Yes, our movement is indeed in its infancy, and in order that it may grow up faster, it must become imbued with intolerance against those who retard its growth by their subservience to spontaneity. Nothing is so ridiculous and harmful as pretending that we are "old hands" who have long ago experienced all the decisive stages of the struggle.

Thirdly, the first issue of *Rabochaya Mysl* shows that the term "Economism" (which, of course, we do not propose to abandon, since, in one way or another, this designation has already established itself) does not adequately convey the real character of the new trend. *Rabochaya Mysl* does not altogether repudiate the political struggle; the rules for a workers' mutual benefit fund published in its first issue con-

* It is often said that the working class *spontaneously* gravitates towards socialism. This is perfectly true in the sense that socialist theory reveals the causes of the misery of the working class more profoundly and more correctly than any other theory, and for that reason the workers are able to assimilate it so easily, *provided*, however, this theory does not itself yield to spontaneity, *provided* it subordinates spontaneity to itself. Usually this is taken for granted, but it is precisely this which *Rabocheye Dyelo* forgets or distorts. The working class spontaneously gravitates towards socialism; nevertheless, most widespread (and continuously and diversely revived) bourgeois ideology spontaneously imposes itself upon the working class to a still greater degree.

tain a reference to combating the government. *Rabochaya Mysl* believes, however, that "politics always obediently follows economics" (*Rabocheye Dyelo* varies this thesis when it asserts in its programme that "in Russia more than in any other country, the economic struggle is inseparable from the political struggle"). *If by politics is meant Social-Democratic politics*, then the theses of *Rabochaya Mysl* and *Rabocheye Dyelo* are utterly incorrect. The economic struggle of the workers is very often connected (although not inseparably) with bourgeois politics, clerical politics, etc., as we have seen. *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s theses are correct, if by politics is meant trade-union politics, viz., the common striving of all workers to secure from the government measures for alleviating the distress to which their condition gives rise, but which do not abolish that condition, i.e., which do not remove the subjection of labour to capital. That striving indeed is common to the English trade-unionists, who are hostile to socialism, to the Catholic workers, to the "Zubatov" workers, etc. There is politics and politics. Thus, we see that *Rabochaya Mysl* does not so much deny the political struggle, as it bows to its *spontaneity*, to its unconsciousness. While fully recognising the political struggle (better: the political desires and demands of the workers), which arises spontaneously from the working-class movement itself, it absolutely refuses *independently to work out* a specifically *Social-Democratic politics* corresponding to the general tasks of socialism and to present-day conditions in Russia. Further on we shall show that *Rabocheye Dyelo* commits the same error.

C. THE SELF-EMANCIPATION GROUP[168] AND *RABOCHEYE DYELO*

We have dealt at such length with the little-known and now almost forgotten leading article in the first issue of *Rabochaya Mysl* because it was the first and most striking expression of that general stream of thought which afterwards emerged into the light of day in innumerable streamlets. V. I. was perfectly right when, in praising the first issue and the leading article of *Rabochaya Mysl*, he said that the article had been written in a "sharp and fervent" manner ("*Listok*" *Rabotnika*, No. 9-10, p. 49). Every man with convictions

who thinks he has something new to say writes "fervently" and in such a way as to make his views stand out in bold relief. Only those who are accustomed to sitting between two stools lack "fervour"; only such people are able to praise the fervour of *Rabochaya Mysl* one day and attack the "fervent polemics" of its opponents the next.

We shall not dwell on the "*Separate Supplement*" *to Rabochaya Mysl* (below we shall have occasion, on various points, to refer to this work, which expresses the ideas of the Economists more consistently than any other) but shall briefly mention the "Appeal of the Self-Emancipation of the Workers Group" (March 1899, reprinted in the London *Nakanune*,[169] No. 7, July 1899). The authors of the "Appeal" rightly say that "the workers of Russia are *only just awakening*, are just beginning to look about them, and are *instinctively clutching at the first available* means of struggle". Yet they draw from this the same false conclusion as that drawn by *Rabochaya Mysl*, forgetting that the instinctive is the unconscious (the spontaneous) to the aid of which socialists must come; that the "first available means of struggle" will always be, in modern society, the trade-union means of struggle, and the "first available" ideology the bourgeois (trade-union) ideology. Similarly, these authors do not "repudiate" politics, they merely (merely!) echo Mr. V. V. that politics is the superstructure, and therefore, "political agitation must be the superstructure to the agitation carried on in favour of the economic struggle; it must arise on the basis of this struggle and follow in its wake."

As for *Rabocheye Dyelo*, it began its activity with the "defence" of the Economists. It stated a *downright untruth* in its opening issue (No. 1, pp. 141-42) in claiming that it "does not know to which young comrades Axelrod referred" when he warned the Economists in his well-known pamphlet.* In the polemic that flared up with Axelrod and Plekhanov over this untruth, *Rabocheye Dyelo* had to admit that "in form of perplexity, it sought *to defend* all the younger Social-Democrats abroad from this unjust accusation" (the charge of narrowness levelled by Axelrod at the Economists). In re-

* *Present Tasks and Tactics of the Russian Social-Democracy*, Geneva, 1898. Two letters to *Rabochaya Gazeta*, written in 1897.

ality this accusation was completely justified, and *Rabocheye Dyelo* knew perfectly well that, among others, it applied also to V. I., a member of its Editorial Board. Let me note in passing that in this polemic Axelrod was entirely right and *Rabocheye Dyelo* entirely wrong in their respective interpretations of my pamphlet *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*.* The pamphlet was written in 1897, before the appearance of *Rabochaya Mysl*, when I thought, rightly, that the *original* tendency of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle, which I characterised above, was dominant. And this tendency was dominant at least until the middle of 1898. Consequently, *Rabocheye Dyelo* had no right whatever, in its attempt to deny the existence and danger of Economism, to refer to a pamphlet that expressed views *forced out* by "Economist" views in St. Petersburg in 1897-98.**

But *Rabocheye Dyelo* not only "defended" the Economists, it itself constantly fell into their fundamental errors. The source of this confusion is to be found in the ambiguity of the interpretation given to the following thesis of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* programme: "We consider that the most important phenomenon of Russian life, the one that will mainly *determine the tasks* [our italics] and the character of the publication activity of the Union, is the *mass working-class movement* [*Rabocheye Dyelo*'s italics] which has arisen in recent years." That the mass movement is a most important phenomenon is a fact not to be disputed. But the crux of the matter is, how is one to understand the statement that the mass working-class movement will "determine the tasks"? It may

* See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 323—51.—*Ed.*

** In defending its first untruth ("we do not know to which young comrades Axelrod referred"), *Rabocheye Dyelo* added a second, when it wrote in its *Reply*: "Since the review of *The Tasks* was published, tendencies have arisen, or become more or less clearly defined, among certain Russian Social-Democrats, towards economic one-sidedness, which represent a step backwards from the state of our movement as described in *The Tasks*" (p. 9). This, in the *Reply*, published *in 1900*. But the first issue of *Rabocheye Dyelo* (containing the review) appeared *in April 1899*. Did Economism really arise only in 1899? No. The year 1899 saw the first protest of the *Russian* Social-Democrats against Economism (the protest against the *Credo*). Economism arose in 1897, as *Rabocheye Dyelo* very well knows, for already *in November 1898*, *V. I.* was praising *Rabochaya Mysl* (see "*Listok*" *Rabotnika*, No. 9-10).

be interpreted in one of two ways. *Either* it means bowing to the spontaneity of this movement, i.e., reducing the role of Social-Democracy to mere subservience to the working-class movement as such (the interpretation of *Rabochaya Mysl*, the Self-Emancipation Group, and other Economists), or it means that the mass movement places before us new theoretical, political, and organisational tasks, far more complicated than those that might have satisfied us in the period before the rise of the mass movement. *Rabocheye Dyelo* inclined and still inclines towards the first interpretation, for it has said nothing definite about any new tasks, but has argued constantly as though the "mass movement" *relieves* us of the necessity of clearly understanding and fulfilling the tasks it sets before us. We need only point out that *Rabocheye Dyelo* considered that it was impossible to set the overthrow of the autocracy as the *first* task of the mass working-class movement, and that it degraded this task (in the name of the mass movement) to that of a struggle for immediate political demands (*Reply*, p. 25).

We shall pass over the article by B. Krichevsky, editor of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, entitled "The Economic and the Political Struggle in the Russian Movement", published in No. 7 of that paper, in which these very mistakes* are repeated, and

* The "stages theory", or the theory of "timid zigzags", in the political struggle is expressed, for example, in this article, in the following way: "Political demands, which in their character are common to the whole of Russia, should, however, at first (this was written in August 1900!) correspond to the experience gained by the given stratum [*sic*!] of workers in the economic struggle. Only [!] on the basis of this experience can and should political agitation be taken up," etc. (p. 11). On page 4, the author, protesting against what he regards as the absolutely unfounded charge of Economist heresy, pathetically exclaims: "What Social-Democrat does not know that according to the theories of Marx and Engels the economic interests of certain classes play a decisive role in history, and, *consequently*, that particularly the proletariat's struggle for its economic interests must be of paramount importance in its class development and struggle for emancipation?" (Our italics.) The word "consequently" is completely irrelevant. The fact that economic interests play a decisive role *does not in the least imply* that the economic (i.e., trade-union) struggle is of prime importance; for the most essential, the "decisive" interests of classes can be satisfied *only* by radical *political* changes in general. In particular the fundamental economic interests of the proletariat can be satisfied only by a political revolution that will replace the dic-

proceed directly to *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10. We shall not, of course, enter in detail into the various objections raised by Krichevsky and Martynov against *Zarya* and *Iskra*. We are here interested solely in the basis of principles on which *Rabocheye Dyelo*, in its tenth issue, took its stand. Thus, we shall not examine the strange fact that *Rabocheye Dyelo* saw a "diametrical contradiction" between the proposition:

"Social-Democracy does not tie its hands, it does not restrict its activities to some one preconceived plan or method of political struggle; it recognises all means of struggle as long as they correspond to the forces at the disposal of the Party," etc. (*Iskra*, No. 1)*.

and the proposition:

"Without a strong organisation skilled in waging political struggle under all circumstances and at all times, there can be no question of that systematic plan of action, illumined by firm principles and steadfastly carried out, which alone is worthy of the name of tactics" (*Iskra*, No. 4).**

To confound recognition, *in principle*, of all means of struggle, of all plans and methods, provided they are expedient, with the demand *at a given political moment* to be guided by a strictly observed plan is tantamount, if we are to talk of tactics, to confounding the recognition by medical science of various methods of treating diseases with the necessity for adopting a certain definite method of treatment for a given disease. The point is, however, that *Rabocheye Dyelo*, itself the victim of a disease which we have called bowing to spontaneity, refuses to recognise any "method of treatment" for *that* disease. Hence, it has made the remarkable discovery that "tactics-as-plan contradicts the fundamental spirit of Marxism" (No. 10, p. 18), that tactics are "*a process of growth of Party tasks*, *which grow together with the Party*" (p. 11, *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s italics). This remark

tatorship of the bourgeoisie by the dictatorship of the proletariat. Krichevsky repeats the arguments of the "V. V.'s of Russian Social-Democracy" (viz., that politics follows economics, etc.) and of the Bernsteinians of German Social-Democracy (e.g., by similar arguments Woltmann sought to prove that the workers must first of all acquire "economic power" before they can think about political revolution).

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 370-71.—*Ed*.

** See present volume, p. 18.—*Ed*.

has every chance of becoming a celebrated maxim, a permanent monument to the *Rabocheye Dyelo* "trend". To the question, *whither*? the leading organ replies: Movement is a process of changing the distance between the starting-point and subsequent points of the movement. This matchless example of profundity is not merely a curiosity (were it that, it would not be worth dealing with at length), but *the programme of a whole trend*, the very programme which R. M. (in the "*Separate Supplement*" *to Rabochaya Mysl*) expressed in the words: That struggle is desirable which is possible, and the struggle which is possible is that which is going on at the given moment. This is precisely the trend of unbounded opportunism, which passively adapts itself to spontaneity.

"Tactics-as-plan contradicts the essence of Marxism!" But this is a slander of Marxism; it means turning Marxism into the caricature held up by the Narodniks in their struggle against us. It means belittling the initiative and energy of class-conscious fighters, whereas Marxism, on the contrary, gives a gigantic impetus to the initiative and energy of the Social-Democrat, opens up for him the widest perspectives, and (if one may so express it) places at his disposal the mighty force of many millions of workers "spontaneously" rising for the struggle. The entire history of international Social-Democracy teems with plans advanced now by one, now by another, political leader, some confirming the far-sightedness and the correct political and organisational views of their authors and others revealing their short-sightedness and their political errors. At the time when Germany was at one of the crucial turning-points in its history—the formation of the Empire, the opening of the Reichstag, and the granting of universal suffrage—Liebknecht had one plan for Social-Democratic politics and work in general, and Schweitzer had another. When the anti-socialist law came down on the heads of the German socialists, Most and Hasselmann had one plan—they were prepared then and there to call for violence and terror; Höchberg, Schramm, and (partly) Bernstein had another—they began to preach to the Social-Democrats that they themselves had provoked the enactment of the law by being unreasonably bitter and revolutionary, and must now earn forgiveness by their exemplary conduct. There was

yet a third plan proposed by those who prepared and carried out the publication of an illegal organ. It is easy, of course, with hindsight, many years after the struggle over the selection of the path to be followed, and after history has pronounced its verdict as to the expediency of the path selected, to utter profound maxims about the growth of Party tasks, which grow together with the Party. But at a time of confusion,* when the Russian "Critics" and Economists are degrading Social-Democracy to the level of trade-unionism, and when the terrorists are strongly advocating the adoption of "tactics-as-plan" that repeats the old mistakes, at such a time, to confine oneself to profundities of this kind, means simply to issue to oneself a "certificate of poverty". At a time when many Russian Social-Democrats suffer from a lack of initiative and energy, from an inadequate "scope of political propaganda, agitation, and organisation,"** from a lack of "plans" for a broader organisation of revolutionary work, at such a time, to declare that "tactics-as-plan" contradicts the essence of Marxism means not only to vulgarise Marxism in the realm of theory, but *to drag the Party backward* in practice.

Rabocheye Dyelo goes on to sermonise:

> "The task of the revolutionary Social-Democrat is only to accelerate objective development by his conscious work, not to obviate it or substitute his own subjective plans for this development. *Iskra* knows all this in theory; but the enormous importance which Marxism justly attaches to conscious revolutionary work causes it in practice, owing to its doctrinaire view of tactics, *to belittle the significance of the objective or the spontaneous element of development*" (p. 18).

Another example of the extraordinary theoretical confusion worthy of Mr. V. V. and his fraternity. We would ask our philosopher: how may a designer of subjective plans "belittle" objective development? Obviously by losing sight of the fact that this objective development creates or strength-

---

* "*Ein Jahr der Verwirrung*" ("A Year of Confusion") is the title Mehring gave to the chapter of his *History of German Social-Democracy* in which he describes the hesitancy and lack of determination displayed at first by the socialists in selecting the "tactics-as-plan" for the new situation.

** Leading article in *Iskra*, No. 1. (See present edition, Vol. 4, p. 369.—*Ed.*)

ens, destroys or weakens certain classes, strata, or groups, certain nations or groups of nations, etc., and in this way serves to determine a given international political alignment of forces, or the position adopted by revolutionary parties, etc. If the designer of plans did that, his guilt would not be that he belittled the spontaneous element, but, on the contrary, that he belittled the *conscious* element, for he would then show that he lacked the "consciousness" properly to understand objective development. Hence, the very talk of "estimating the *relative* significance" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*'s italics) of spontaneity and consciousness itself reveals a complete lack of "consciousness". If certain "spontaneous elements of development" can be grasped at all by human understanding, then an incorrect estimation of them will be tantamount to "belittling the conscious element". But if they cannot be grasped, then we do not know them, and therefore cannot speak of them. What then is Krichevsky discussing? If he thinks that *Iskra*'s "subjective plans" are erroneous (as he in fact declares them to be), he should have shown what objective facts they ignore, and only then charged *Iskra* with *lacking political consciousness* for ignoring them, with "belittling the conscious element", to use his own words. If, however, displeased with subjective plans, he can bring forward no argument other than that of "belittling the spontaneous element" (!), he merely shows: (1) that, theoretically, he understands Marxism *à la* Kareyev and Mikhailovsky, who have been sufficiently ridiculed by Beltov;[170] and (2) that, practically, he is quite satisfied with the "spontaneous elements of development" that have drawn our legal Marxists towards Bernsteinism and our Social-Democrats towards Economism, and that he is "full of wrath" against those who have determined at all costs *to divert* Russian Social-Democracy from the path of "spontaneous" development.

Further, there follow things that are positively droll. "Just as human beings will reproduce in the old-fashioned way despite all the discoveries of natural science, so the birth of a new social order will come about, in the future too, *mainly* as a result of elemental outbursts, despite all the discoveries of social science and the increase in the number of conscious fighters" (p. 19). Just as our grandfathers in

their old-fashioned wisdom used to say, Anyone can bring children into the world, so today the "modern socialists" (*à la* Nartsis Tuporylov)[171] say in their wisdom, Anyone can participate in the spontaneous birth of a new social order. We too hold that anyone can. All that is required for participation of that kind is *to yield* to Economism when Economism reigns and to terrorism when terrorism arises. Thus, in the spring of this year, when it was so important to utter a note of warning against infatuation with terrorism, *Rabocheye Dyelo* stood in amazement, confronted by a problem that was "new" to it. And now, six months after, when the problem has become less topical, it presents us at one and the same time with the declaration: "We think that it is not and should not be the task of Social-Democracy to counteract the rise of terroristic sentiments" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 23), and with the Conference resolution: "The Conference regards systematic and aggressive terror as being inopportune" (*Two Conferences*, p. 18). How beautifully clear and coherent this is! Not to counteract, but to declare inopportune, and to declare it in such a way that unsystematic and defensive terror does not come within the scope of the "resolution". It must be admitted that such a resolution is extremely safe and is fully insured against error, just as a man who talks, but says nothing, insures himself against error. All that is needed to frame such a resolution is an ability to keep *at the tail-end* of the movement. When *Iskra* ridiculed *Rabocheye Dyelo* for declaring the question of terror to be new,* the latter angrily accused *Iskra* of "having the incredible effrontery to impose upon the Party organisation solutions of tactical questions proposed by a group of emigrant writers more than fifteen years ago" (p. 24). Effrontery indeed, and what an overestimation of the conscious element—first to resolve questions theoretically beforehand, and then to try to convince the organisation, the Party, and the masses of the correctness of this solution!** How much better it would be to repeat the elements and, without "imposing" anything upon anybody, swing with every

* See present volume, p. 18-20.—*Ed.*

** Nor must it be forgotten that in solving "theoretically" the problem of terror, the Emancipation of Labour group *generalised* the experience of the antecedent revolutionary movement.

"turn"—whether in the direction of Economism or in the direction of terrorism. *Rabocheye Dyelo* even generalises this great precept of worldly wisdom and accuses *Iskra* and *Zarya* of "setting up their programme against the movement, like a spirit hovering over the formless chaos" (p. 29). But what else is the function of Social-Democracy if not to be a "spirit" that not only hovers over the spontaneous movement, but also *raises* this movement *to the level of* "*its programme*"? Surely, it is not its function to drag at the *tail* of the movement. At best, this would be of no service to the movement; at worst, it would be exceedingly harmful. *Rabocheye Dyelo*, however, not only follows this "tactics-as-process", but elevates it to a principle, so that it would be more correct to describe its tendency not as opportunism, but as *tail-ism* (from the word *tail*). And it must be admitted that those who are determined always to follow behind the movement and be its tail are absolutely and forever guaranteed against "belittling the spontaneous element of development".

* * *

And so, we have become convinced that the fundamental error committed by the "new trend" in Russian Social-Democracy is its bowing to spontaneity and its failure to understand that the spontaneity of the masses demands a high degree of consciousness from us Social-Democrats. The greater the spontaneous upsurge of the masses and the more widespread the movement, the more rapid, incomparably so, the demand for greater consciousness in the theoretical, political and organisational work of Social-Democracy.

The spontaneous upsurge of the masses in Russia proceeded (and continues) with such rapidity that the young Social-Democrats proved unprepared to meet these gigantic tasks. This unpreparedness is our common misfortune, the misfortune of *all* Russian Social-Democrats. The upsurge of the masses proceeded and spread with uninterrupted continuity; it not only continued in the places where it began, but spread to new localities and to new strata of the population (under the influence of the working-class movement, there was a renewed ferment among the student youth, among the intellectuals generally, and even among the peasantry).

Revolutionaries, however, *lagged behind* this upsurge, both in their "theories" and in their activity; they failed to establish a constant and continuous organisation capable of *leading* the whole movement.

In Chapter I, we established that *Rabocheye Dyelo* belittled our theoretical tasks and that it "spontaneously" repeated the fashionable catchword "freedom of criticism"; those who repeated this catchword lacked the "consciousness" to understand that the positions of the opportunist "Critics" and those of the revolutionaries in Germany and in Russia are diametrically opposed.

In the following chapters, we shall show how this bowing to spontaneity found expression in the sphere of the political tasks and in the organisational work of Social-Democracy.

III

TRADE-UNIONIST POLITICS AND SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

We shall again begin by praising *Rabocheye Dyelo*. "Literature of Exposure and the Proletarian Struggle" is the title Martynov gave the article on his differences with *Iskra* published in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10. He formulated the substance of the differences as follows: "We cannot confine ourselves solely to exposing the system that stands in its [the working-class party's] path of development. We must also react to the immediate and current interests of the proletariat. ... *Iskra* ... is in fact an organ of revolutionary opposition that exposes the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs.... We, however, work and shall continue to work for the cause of the working class in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle" (p. 63). One cannot help being grateful to Martynov for this formula. It is of outstanding general interest, because substantially it embraces not only our disagreements with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, but the general disagreement between ourselves and the "Economists" on the political struggle. We have shown that the "Economists" do not altogether repudiate "politics", but that they are constantly straying from the Social-Democratic to the trade-unionist conception of politics. Martynov

strays in precisely this way, and we shall therefore take his views as a *model* of Economist error on this question. As we shall endeavour to prove, neither the authors of the "*Separate Supplement*" *to Rabochaya Mysl* nor the authors of the manifesto issued by the Self-Emancipation Group, nor the authors of the Economist letter published in *Iskra*, No. 12, will have any right to complain against this choice.

A. POLITICAL AGITATION AND ITS RESTRICTION BY THE ECONOMISTS

Everyone knows that the economic* struggle of the Russian workers underwent widespread development and consolidation simultaneously with the production of "literature" exposing economic (factory and occupational) conditions. The "leaflets" were devoted mainly to the exposure of the factory system, and very soon a veritable passion for exposures was roused among the workers. As soon as the workers realised that the Social-Democratic study circles desired to, and could, supply them with a new kind of leaflet that told the whole truth about their miserable existence, about their unbearably hard toil, and their lack of rights, they began to send in, actually flood us with, correspondence from the factories and workshops. This "exposure literature" created a tremendous sensation, not only in the particular factory exposed in the given leaflet, but in all the factories to which news of the revealed facts spread. And since the poverty and want among the workers in the various enterprises and in the various trades are much the same, the "truth about the life of the workers" stirred *everyone*. Even among the most backward workers, a veritable passion arose to "get into print"—a noble passion for this rudimentary form of war against the whole of the present social system which is based upon robbery and oppression. And in the overwhelming majority of cases these "leaflets" were in truth a declaration of

* To avoid misunderstanding, we must point out that here, and throughout this pamphlet, by economic struggle, we imply (in keeping with the accepted usage among us) the "practical economic struggle", which Engels, in the passage quoted above, described as "resistance to the capitalists", and which in free countries is known as the organised-labour syndical, or trade-union struggle.

war, because the exposures served greatly to agitate the workers; they evoked among them common demands for the removal of the most glaring outrages and roused in them a readiness to support the demands with strikes. Finally, the employers themselves were compelled to recognise the significance of these leaflets as a declaration of war, so much so that in a large number of cases they did not even wait for the outbreak of hostilities. As is always the case, the mere publication of these exposures made them effective, and they acquired the significance of a strong moral influence. On more than one occasion, the mere appearance of a leaflet proved sufficient to secure the satisfaction of all or part of the demands put forward. In a word, economic (factory) exposures were and remain an important lever in the economic struggle. And they will continue to retain this significance as long as there is capitalism, which makes it necessary for the workers to defend themselves. Even in the most advanced countries of Europe it can still be seen that the exposure of abuses in some backward trade, or in some forgotten branch of domestic industry, serves as a starting-point for the awakening of class-consciousness, for the beginning of a trade-union struggle, and for the spread of socialism.*

The overwhelming majority of Russian Social-Democrats have of late been almost entirely absorbed by this work of organising the exposure of factory conditions. Suffice it to recall *Rabochaya Mysl* to see the extent to which they have been absorbed by it—so much so, indeed, that they have

* In the present chapter we deal only with the *political* struggle, in its broader or narrower meaning. Therefore, we note only in passing, merely as a curiosity, *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s charge that *Iskra* is "too restrained" in regard to the economic struggle (*Two Conferences*, p. 27, rehashed by Martynov in his pamphlet, *Social-Democracy and the Working Class*). If the accusers computed by the hundredweights or reams (as they are so fond of doing) any given year's discussion of the economic struggle in the industrial section of *Iskra*, in comparison with the corresponding sections of *Rabocheye Dyelo* and *Rabochaya Mysl* combined, they would easily see that the latter lag behind even in this respect. Apparently, the realisation of this simple truth compels them to resort to arguments that clearly reveal their confusion. "*Iskra*," they write, "willy-nilly [!] is compelled [!] to reckon with the imperative demands of life and to publish at least [!!] correspondence about the working-class movement" (*Two Conferences*, p. 27). Now this is really a crushing argument!

lost sight of the fact that this, *taken by itself*, is in essence still not Social-Democratic work, but merely trade-union work. As a matter of fact, the exposures merely dealt with the relations between the workers *in a given trade* and their employers, and all they achieved was that the sellers of labour-power learned to sell their "commodity" on better terms and to fight the purchasers over a purely commercial deal. These exposures could have served (if properly utilised by an organisation of revolutionaries) as a beginning and a component part of Social-Democratic activity; but they could also have led (and, given a worshipful attitude towards spontaneity, were bound to lead) to a "purely trade-union" struggle and to a non-Social-Democratic working-class movement. Social-Democracy leads the struggle of the working class, not only for better terms for the sale of labour-power, but for the abolition of the social system that compels the propertyless to sell themselves to the rich. Social-Democracy represents the working class, not in its relation to a given group of employers alone, but in its relation to all classes of modern society and to the state as an organised political force. Hence, it follows that not only must Social-Democrats not confine themselves exclusively to the economic struggle, but that they must not allow the organisation of economic exposures to become the predominant part of their activities. We must take up actively the political education of the working class and the development of its political consciousness. *Now* that *Zarya* and *Iskra* have made the first attack upon Economism, "all are agreed" on this (although some agree only in words, as we shall soon see).

The question arises, what should political education consist in? Can it be confined to the propaganda of working-class hostility to the autocracy? Of course not. It is not enough *to explain* to the workers that they are politically oppressed (any more than it is *to explain* to them that their interests are antagonistic to the interests of the employers). Agitation must be conducted with regard to every concrete example of this oppression (as we have begun to carry on agitation round concrete examples of economic oppression). Inasmuch as *this* oppression affects the most diverse classes of society, inasmuch as it manifests itself in the most varied spheres of life and activity—vocational, civic, personal, family,

religious, scientific, etc., etc.—is it not evident that *we shall not be fulfilling our task* of developing the political consciousness of the workers if we do not *undertake* the organisation of the *political exposure* of the autocracy *in all its aspects*? In order to carry on agitation round concrete instances of oppression, these instances must be exposed (as it is necessary to expose factory abuses in order to carry on economic agitation).

One might think this to be clear enough. It turns out, however, that it is only in words that "all" are agreed on the need to develop political consciousness, *in all its aspects*. It turns out that *Rabocheye Dyelo*, for example, far from tackling the task of organising (or making a start in organising) comprehensive political exposure, is even trying *to drag Iskra*, which has undertaken this task, *away from it*. Listen to the following: "The political struggle of the working class is merely [it is certainly not "merely"] the most developed, wide, and effective form of economic struggle" (programme of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, published in issue No. 1, p. 3). "The Social-Democrats are now confronted with the task of lending the economic struggle itself, as far as possible, a political character" (Martynov, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 42). "The economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle" (resolution adopted by the Conference of the Union Abroad and "amendments" thereto, *Two Conferences*, pp. 11 and 17). As the reader will observe, all these theses permeate *Rabocheye Dyelo* from its very first number to the latest "Instructions to the Editors", and all of them evidently express a single view regarding political agitation and struggle. Let us examine this view from the standpoint of the opinion prevailing among all Economists, that political agitation must *follow* economic agitation. Is it true that, in general,* the economic struggle "is the most widely appli-

* We say "in general", because *Rabocheye Dyelo* speaks of general principles and of the general tasks of the Party as a whole. Undoubtedly, cases occur in practice when politics really *must* follow economics, but only Economists can speak of this in a resolution intended to apply to the whole of Russia. Cases do occur when *it is possible* "right from the beginning" to carry on political agitation "exclusively on an economic basis"; yet *Rabocheye Dyelo* came in the end to

cable means" of drawing the masses into the political struggle? It is entirely untrue. *Any and every* manifestation of police tyranny and autocratic outrage, not only in connection with the economic struggle, is not one whit less "widely applicable" as a means of "drawing in" the masses. The rural superintendents and the flogging of peasants, the corruption of the officials and the police treatment of the "common people" in the cities, the fight against the famine-stricken and the suppression of the popular striving towards enlightenment and knowledge, the extortion of taxes and the persecution of the religious sects, the humiliating treatment of soldiers and the barrack methods in the treatment of the students and liberal intellectuals—do all these and a thousand other similar manifestations of tyranny, though not directly connected with the "economic" struggle, represent, in general, *less* "widely applicable" means and occasions for political agitation and for drawing the masses into the political struggle? The very opposite is true. Of the sum-total of cases in which the workers suffer (either on their own account or on account of those closely connected with them) from tyranny, violence, and the lack of rights, undoubtedly only a small minority represent cases of police tyranny in the trade-union struggle as such. Why then should we, beforehand, *restrict* the scope of political agitation by declaring only *one* of the means to be "the most widely applicable", when Social-Democrats must have, in addition, other, generally speaking, no less "widely applicable" means?

In the dim and distant past (a full year ago!...) *Rabocheye Dyelo* wrote: "The masses begin to understand immediate political demands after one strike, or at all events, after several", "as soon as the government sets the police and gendarmerie against them" [*August* (No. 7) 1900, p. 15]. This opportunist theory of stages has now been rejected by the Union Abroad, which makes a concession to us by declaring: "There is no need whatever to conduct political agitation

---

the conclusion that "there is no need for this whatever" (*Two Conferences*, p. 11). In the following chapter, we shall show that the tactics of the "politicians" and revolutionaries not only do not ignore the trade-union tasks of Social-Democracy, but that, on the contrary, they alone *can secure* their consistent fulfilment.

right from the beginning, exclusively on an economic basis" (*Two Conferences*, p. 11). The Union's repudiation of part of its former errors will show the future historian of Russian Social-Democracy better than any number of lengthy arguments the depths to which our Economists have degraded socialism! But the Union Abroad must be very naïve indeed to imagine that the abandonment of one form of restricting politics will induce us to agree to another form. Would it not be more logical to say, in this case too, that the economic struggle should be conducted on the widest possible basis, that it should always be utilised for political agitation, but that "there is no need whatever" to regard the economic struggle as the *most* widely applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle?

The Union Abroad attaches significance to the fact that it has substituted the phrase "most widely applicable means" for the phrase "the best means" contained in one of the resolutions of the Fourth Congress of the Jewish Workers' Union (Bund). We confess that we find it difficult to say which of these resolutions is the better one. In our opinion they are *both worse*. Both the Union Abroad and the Bund fall into the error (partly, perhaps unconsciously, under the influence of tradition) of giving an Economist, trade-unionist interpretation to politics. Whether this is done by employing the word "best" or the words "most widely applicable" makes no essential difference whatever. Had the Union Abroad said that "political agitation on an economic basis" is the most widely applied (not "applicable") means, it would have been right in regard to a certain period in the development of our Social-Democratic movement. It would have been right in regard to the *Economists* and to many (if not the majority) of the practical workers of 1898-1901; for these practical Economists *applied* political agitation (to the extent that they applied it at all) *almost exclusively on an economic basis*. Political agitation on *such* lines was recognised and, as we have seen, even recommended by *Rabochaya Mysl* and the Self-Emancipation Group. *Rabocheye Dyelo* should have *strongly condemned* the fact that the useful work of economic agitation was accompanied by the harmful restriction of the political struggle; instead, it declares the means most widely *applied* (*by the Economists*) to be the most

widely *applicable*! It is not surprising that when we call these people Economists, they can do nothing but pour every manner of abuse upon us; call us "mystifiers", "disrupters", "papal nuncios", and "slanderers"*; go complaining to the whole world that we have mortally offended them; and declare almost on oath that "not a single Social-Democratic organisation is now tinged with Economism".** Oh, those evil, slanderous politicians! They must have deliberately invented this Economism, out of sheer hatred of mankind, in order mortally to offend other people.

What concrete, real meaning attaches to Martynov's words when he sets before Social-Democracy the task of "lending the economic struggle itself a political character"? The economic struggle is the collective struggle of the workers against their employers for better terms *in the sale of their labour-power*, for better living and working conditions. This struggle is necessarily a trade-union struggle, because working conditions differ greatly in different trades, and, consequently, the struggle *to improve* them can only be conducted on the basis of trade organisations (in the Western countries, through trade unions; in Russia, through temporary trade associations and through leaflets, etc.). Lending "the economic struggle itself a political character" means, therefore, striving to secure satisfaction of these trade demands, the improvement of working conditions in each separate trade by means of "legislative and administrative measures" (as Martynov puts it on the ensuing page of his article, p. 43). This is precisely what all workers' trade unions do and always have done. Read the works of the soundly scientific (and "soundly" opportunist) Mr. and Mrs. Webb and you will see that the British trade unions long ago recognised, and have long been carrying out, the task of "lending the economic struggle itself a political character"; they have long been fighting for the right to strike, for the removal of all legal hindrances to the co-operative and trade-union movements, for laws to protect women and children, for the improvement of labour conditions by means of health and factory legislation, etc.

* These are the precise expressions used in *Two Conferences*, pp. 31, 32, 28 and 80.

** *Two Conferences*, p. 32.

Thus, the pompous phrase about "lending the economic struggle *itself* a political character", which sounds so "terrifically" profound and revolutionary, serves as a screen to conceal what is in fact the traditional striving *to degrade* Social-Democratic politics to the level of trade-union politics. Under the guise of rectifying the one-sidedness of *Iskra*, which, it is alleged, places "the revolutionising of dogma higher than the revolutionising of life",* we are presented with the *struggle for economic reforms* as if it were something entirely new. In point of fact, the phrase "lending the economic struggle itself a political character" means nothing more than the struggle for economic reforms. Martynov himself might have come to this simple conclusion, had he pondered over the significance of his own words. "Our Party," he says, training his heaviest guns on *Iskra*, "could and should have presented concrete demands to the government for legislative and administrative measures against economic exploitation, unemployment, famine, etc." (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, pp. 42-43). Concrete demands for measures—does not this mean demands for social reforms? Again we ask the impartial reader: Are we slandering the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ites (may I be forgiven for this awkward, currently used designation!) by calling them concealed Bernsteinians when, as their point of *disagreement* with *Iskra*, they advance their thesis on the necessity of struggling for economic reforms?

Revolutionary Social-Democracy has always included the struggle for reforms as part of its activities. But it utilises "economic" agitation for the purpose of presenting to the government, not only demands for all sorts of measures, but also (and primarily) the demand that it cease to be an autocratic government. Moreover, it considers it its duty to present this demand to the government on the basis, not of the economic struggle *alone*, but of all manifestations in general of public and political life. In a word,

---

* *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 60. This is the Martynov variation of the application, which we have characterised above, of the thesis "every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes" to the present chaotic state of our movement. In fact, this is merely a translation into Russian of the notorious Bernsteinian sentence: "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing."

it subordinates the struggle for reforms, as the part to the whole, to the revolutionary struggle for freedom and for socialism. Martynov, however, resuscitates the theory of stages in a new form and strives to prescribe, as it were, an exclusively economic path of development for the political struggle. By advancing at this moment, when the revolutionary movement is on the upgrade, an alleged special "task" of struggling for reforms, he is dragging the Party backwards and is playing into the hands of both "Economist" and liberal opportunism.

To proceed. Shamefacedly hiding the struggle for reforms behind the pompous thesis of "lending the economic struggle itself a political character", Martynov advanced, as if it were a special point, *exclusively economic* (indeed, exclusively factory) *reforms*. As to the reason for his doing that, we do not know it. Carelessness, perhaps? Yet if he had in mind something else besides "factory" reforms, then the whole of his thesis, which we have cited, loses all sense. Perhaps he did it because he considers it possible and probable that the government will make "concessions" only in the economic sphere?* If so, then it is a strange delusion. Concessions are also possible and are made in the sphere of legislation concerning flogging, passports, land redemption payments, religious sects, the censorship, etc., etc. "Economic" concessions (or pseudo-concessions) are, of course, the cheapest and most advantageous from the government's point of view, because by these means it hopes to win the confidence of the working masses. For this very reason, we Social-Democrats *must not* under any circumstances or in any way whatever create grounds for the belief (or the misunderstanding) that we attach greater value to economic reforms, or that we regard them as being particularly important, etc. "Such demands," writes Martynov, speaking of the concrete demands for legislative and administrative measures referred to above, "would not be merely a hollow sound, because, promising certain palpable results, they might be actively supported by the working masses...." We are not Economists,

* P. 43. "Of course, when we advise the workers to present certain economic demands to the government, we do so because in the economic sphere the autocratic government is, of necessity, prepared to make certain concessions!"

oh no! We only cringe as slavishly before the "palpableness" of concrete results as do the Bernsteins, the Prokopoviches, the Struves, the R. M.'s, and *tutti quanti*! We only wish to make it understood (together with Nartsis Tuporylov) that all which "does not promise palpable results" is merely a "hollow sound"! We are only trying to argue as if the working masses were incapable (and had not already proved their capabilities, notwithstanding those who ascribe their own philistinism to them) of actively supporting every protest against the autocracy, even if it *promises absolutely no palpable results whatever*!

Let us take, for example, the very "measures" for the relief of unemployment and the famine that Martynov himself advances. *Rabocheye Dyelo* is engaged, judging by what it has promised, in drawing up and elaborating a programme of "concrete [in the form of bills?] demands for legislative and administrative measures", "promising palpable results", while *Iskra*, which "constantly places the revolutionising of dogma higher than the revolutionising of life", has tried to explain the inseparable connection between unemployment and the whole capitalist system, has given warning that "famine is coming", has exposed the police "fight against the famine-stricken", and the outrageous "provisional penal servitude regulations"; and *Zarya* has published a special reprint, in the form of an agitational pamphlet, of a section of its "Review of Home Affairs", dealing with the famine.* But good God! How "one-sided" were these incorrigibly narrow and orthodox doctrinaires, how deaf to the calls of "life itself"! Their articles contained—oh horror!—*not a single*, can you imagine it? not a single "concrete demand" "promising palpable results"! Poor doctrinaires! They ought to be sent to Krichevsky and Martynov to be taught that tactics are a process of growth, of that which grows, etc., and that the economic struggle *itself* should be given a political character!

"In addition to its immediate revolutionary significance, the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government ["*economic* struggle against the government"!] has also this significance: it constantly brings home

* See present volume, pp. 253-74.—*Ed.*

to the workers the fact that they have no political rights" (Martynov, p. 44). We quote this passage, not in order to repeat for the hundredth and thousandth time what has been said above, but in order to express particular thanks to Martynov for this excellent new formula: "the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government". What a gem! With what inimitable skill and mastery in eliminating all partial disagreements and shades of differences among Economists this clear and concise proposition expresses the *quintessence* of Economism, from summoning the workers "to the political struggle, which they carry on in the general interest, for the improvement of the conditions of all the workers",* continuing through the theory of stages, and ending in the resolution of the Conference on the "most widely applicable", etc. "Economic struggle against the government" is precisely trade-unionist politics, which is still very far from being Social-Democratic politics.

B. HOW MARTYNOV RENDERED PLEKHANOV MORE PROFOUND

"What a large number of Social-Democratic Lomonosovs have appeared among us lately!" observed a comrade one day, having in mind the astonishing propensity of many who are inclined toward Economism to, arrive, "necessarily, by their own under standing", at great truths (e.g., that the economic struggle stimulates the workers to ponder over their lack of rights) and in doing so to ignore, with the supreme contempt of born geniuses, all that has been produced by the antecedent development of revolutionary thought and of the revolutionary movement. Lomonosov-Martynov is precisely such a born genius. We need but glance at his article "Urgent Questions" to see how by "his own understanding" he *arrives at* what was long ago said by Axelrod (of whom our Lomonosov, naturally, says not a word); how, for instance, he *is beginning* to understand that we cannot ignore the opposition of such or such strata of the bourgeoisie (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 9, pp. 61, 62, 71; compare this with *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s *Reply* to Axelrod, pp. 22, 23-24),

* *Rabochaya Mysl*, "*Separate Supplement*", p. 14.

etc. But alas, he is only "arriving" and is only "beginning", not more than that, for so little has he understood Axelrod's ideas, that he talks about "the economic struggle against the employers and the government". For three years (1898-1901) *Rabocheye Dyelo* has tried hard to understand Axelrod, but has so far not understood him! Can one of the reasons be that Social-Democracy, "like mankind", always sets itself only tasks that can be achieved?

But the Lomonosovs are distinguished not only by their ignorance of many things (that would be but half misfortune!), but also by their unawareness of their own ignorance. Now this is a real misfortune; and it is this misfortune that prompts them without further ado to attempt to render Plekhanov "more profound".

"Much water," Lomonosov-Martynov says, "has flowed under the bridge since Plekhanov wrote his book [*Tasks of the Socialists in the Fight Against the Famine in Russia*]. The Social-Democrats who for a decade led the economic struggle of the working class ... have failed as yet to lay down a broad theoretical basis for Party tactics. This question has now come to a head, and if we should wish to lay down such a theoretical basis, we should certainly have to deepen considerably the principles of tactics developed at one time by Plekhanov.... Our present definition of the distinction between propaganda and agitation would have to be different from Plekhanov's [Martynov has just quoted Plekhanov's words: "A propagandist presents many ideas to one or a few persons; an agitator presents only one or a few ideas, but he presents them to a mass of people."] By propaganda we would understand the revolutionary explanation of the present social system, entire or in its partial manifestations, whether that be done in a form intelligible to individuals or to broad masses. By agitation, in the strict sense of the word [*sic*!], we would understand the call upon the masses to undertake definite, concrete actions and the promotion of the direct revolutionary intervention of the proletariat in social life."

We congratulate Russian—and international—Social-Democracy on having found, thanks to Martynov, a new terminology, more strict and more profound. Hitherto we thought (with Plekhanov, and with all the leaders of the international working-class movement) that the propagandist, dealing with, say, the question of unemployment, must explain the capitalistic nature of crises, the cause of their inevitability in modern society, the necessity for the transformation of this society into a socialist society, etc. In a word, he must present "many ideas", so many, indeed, that

they will be understood as an integral whole only by a (comparatively) few persons. The agitator, however, speaking on the same subject, will take as an illustration a fact that is most glaring and most widely known to his audience, say, the death of an unemployed worker's family from starvation, the growing impoverishment, etc., and, utilising this fact, known to all, will direct his efforts to presenting *a single idea* to the "masses", e.g., the senselessness of the contradiction between the increase of wealth and the increase of poverty; he will strive *to rouse* discontent and indignation among the masses against this crying injustice, leaving a more complete explanation of this contradiction to the propagandist. Consequently, the propagandist operates chiefly by means of the *printed* word; the agitator by means of the *spoken* word. The propagandist requires qualities different from those of the agitator. Kautsky and Lafargue, for example, we term propagandists; Bebel and Guesde we term agitators. To single out a third sphere, or third function, of practical activity, and to include in this function "the call upon the masses to undertake definite concrete actions", is sheer nonsense, because the "call", as a single act, either naturally and inevitably supplements the theoretical treatise, propagandist pamphlet, and agitational speech, or represents a purely executive function. Let us take, for example, the struggle the German Social-Democrats are now waging against the corn duties. The theoreticians write research works on tariff policy, with the "call", say, to struggle for commercial treaties and for Free Trade. The propagandist does the same thing in the periodical press, and the agitator in public speeches. At the present time, the "concrete action" of the masses takes the form of signing petitions to the Reichstag against raising the corn duties. The call for this action comes indirectly from the theoreticians, the propagandists, and the agitators, and, directly, from the workers who take the petition lists to the factories and to private homes for the gathering of signatures. According to the "Martynov terminology", Kautsky and Bebel are both propagandists, while those who solicit the signatures are agitators. Isn't it clear?

The German example recalled to my mind the German word "Verballhornung", which, literally translated, means

"Ballhorning". Johann Ballhorn, a Leipzig publisher of the sixteenth century, published a child's reader in which, as was the custom, he introduced a drawing of a cock, but a cock without spurs and with a couple of eggs lying near it. On the cover he printed the legend, "*Revised* edition by Johann Ballhorn". Ever since then, the Germans describe any "revision" that is really a worsening as "ballhorning". And one cannot help recalling Ballhorn upon seeing how the Martynovs try to render Plekhanov "more profound".

Why did our Lomonosov "invent" this confusion? In order to illustrate how *Iskra* "devotes attention only to one side of the case, just as Plekhanov did a decade and a half ago" (39). "With *Iskra*, propagandist tasks force agitational tasks into the background, at least for the present" (52). If we translate this last proposition from the language of Martynov into ordinary human language (because mankind has not yet managed to learn the newly-invented terminology), we shall get the following: with *Iskra*, the tasks of political propaganda and political agitation force into the background the task of "presenting to the government concrete demands for legislative and administrative measures" that "promise certain palpable results" (or demands for social reforms, that is, if we are permitted once again to employ the old terminology of the old mankind not yet grown to Martynov's level). We suggest that the reader compare this thesis with the following tirade:

> "What also astonishes us in these programmes [the programmes advanced by revolutionary Social-Democrats] is their constant stress upon the benefits of workers' activity in parliament [non-existent in Russia], though they completely ignore [thanks to their revolutionary nihilism] the importance of workers' participation in the legislative manufacturers' assemblies on factory affairs [which do exist in Russia] ... or at least the importance of workers' participation in municipal bodies...."

The author of this tirade expresses in a somewhat more forthright and clearer manner the very idea which Lomonosov-Martynov discovered by his own understanding. The author is R. M., in the "*Separate Supplement*" *to Rabochaya Mysl* (p. 15).

C. POLITICAL EXPOSURES AND "TRAINING IN REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY"

In advancing against *Iskra* his theory of "raising the activity of the working masses", Martynov actually betrayed an urge *to belittle* that activity, for he declared the very economic struggle before which all economists grovel to be the preferable, particularly important, and "most widely applicable" means of rousing this activity and its broadest field. This error is characteristic, precisely in that it is by no means peculiar to Martynov. In reality, it is possible to "raise the activity of the working masses" *only* when this activity *is not restricted* to "political agitation on an economic basis". A basic condition for the necessary expansion of political agitation is the organisation of *comprehensive* political exposure. *In no way* except by means of such exposures can the masses be trained in political consciousness and revolutionary activity. Hence, activity of this kind is one of the most important functions of international Social-Democracy as a whole, for even political freedom does not in any way eliminate exposures; it merely shifts somewhat their sphere of direction. Thus, the German party is especially strengthening its positions and spreading its influence, thanks particularly to the untiring energy with which it is conducting its campaign of political exposure. Working-class consciousness cannot be genuine political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to *all* cases of tyranny, oppression, violence, and abuse, no matter *what class* is affected—unless they are trained, moreover, to respond from a Social-Democratic point of view and no other. The consciousness of the working masses cannot be genuine class-consciousness, unless the workers learn, from concrete, and above all from topical, political facts and events to observe *every* other social class in *all* the manifestations of its intellectual, ethical, and political life; unless they learn to apply in practice the materialist analysis and the materialist estimate of *all* aspects of the life and activity of *all* classes, strata, and groups of the population. Those who concentrate the attention, observation, and consciousness of the working class exclusively, or even mainly, upon itself alone are not Social-Democrats; for the self-knowledge of the working class is indissolubly bound up, not solely with a fully clear theo-

retical understanding—or rather, not so much with the theoretical, as with the practical, understanding—of the relationships between *all* the various classes of modern society, acquired through the experience of political life. For this reason the conception of the economic struggle as the most widely applicable means of drawing the masses into the political movement, which our Economists preach, is so extremely harmful and reactionary in its practical significance. In order to become a Social-Democrat, the worker must have a clear picture in his mind of the economic nature and the social and political features of the landlord and the priest, the high state official and the peasant, the student and the vagabond; he must know their strong and weak points; he must grasp the meaning of all the catchwords and sophisms by which each class and each stratum *camouflages* its selfish strivings and its real "inner workings"; he must understand what interests are reflected by certain institutions and certain laws and how they are reflected. But this "clear picture" cannot be obtained from any book. It can be obtained only from living examples and from exposures that follow close upon what is going on about us at a given moment; upon what is being discussed, in whispers perhaps, by each one in his own way; upon what finds expression in such and such events, in such and such statistics, in such and such court sentences, etc., etc. These comprehensive political exposures are an essential and *fundamental* condition for training the masses in revolutionary activity.

Why do the Russian workers still manifest little revolutionary activity in response to the brutal treatment of the people by the police, the persecution of religious sects, the flogging of peasants, the outrageous censorship, the torture of soldiers, the persecution of the most innocent cultural undertakings, etc.? Is it because the "economic struggle" does not "stimulate" them to this, because such activity does not "promise palpable results", because it produces little that is "positive"? To adopt such an opinion, we repeat, is merely to direct the charge where it does not belong, to blame the working masses for one's own philistinism (or Bernsteinism). We must blame ourselves, our lagging behind the mass movement, for still being unable to organise

sufficiently wide, striking, and rapid exposures of all the shameful outrages. When we do that (and we must and can do it), the most backward worker will understand, *or will feel*, that the students and religious sects, the peasants and the authors are being abused and outraged by those same dark forces that are oppressing and crushing him at every step of his life. Feeling that, he himself will be filled with an irresistible desire to react, and he will know how to hoot the censors one day, on another day to demonstrate outside the house of a governor who has brutally suppressed a peasant uprising, on still another day to teach a lesson to the gendarmes in surplices who are doing the work of the Holy Inquisition, etc. As yet we have done very little, almost nothing, *to bring* before the working masses prompt exposures on all possible issues. Many of us as yet do not recognise this as our *bounden duty* but trail spontaneously in the wake of the "drab everyday struggle", in the narrow confines of factory life. Under such circumstances to say that "*Iskra* displays a tendency to minimise the significance of the forward march of the drab everyday struggle in comparison with the propaganda of brilliant and complete ideas" (Martynov, op. cit., p. 61), means to drag the Party back, to defend and glorify our unpreparedness and backwardness.

As for calling the masses to action, that will come of itself as soon as energetic political agitation, live and striking exposures come into play. To catch some criminal red-handed and immediately to brand him publicly in all places is of itself far more effective than any number of "calls"; the effect very often is such as will make it impossible to tell exactly who it was that "called" upon the masses and who suggested this or that plan of demonstration, etc. Calls for action, not in the general, but in the concrete, sense of the term can be made only at the place of action; only those who themselves go into action, and do so immediately, can sound such calls. Our business as Social-Democratic publicists is to deepen, expand, and intensify political exposures and political agitation.

A word in passing about "calls to action". *The only newspaper* which *prior to* the spring events *called upon* the workers to intervene actively in a matter that certainly did not *promise* any *palpable results* whatever for the workers, i.e.,

the drafting of the students into the army, *was Iskra*. Immediately after the publication of the order of January 11, on "drafting the 183 students into the army", *Iskra* published an article on the matter (in its February issue, No. 2),* and, *before* any demonstration was begun, forthwith *called upon* "the workers to go to the aid of the students", called upon the "people" openly to take up the government's arrogant challenge. We ask: how is the remarkable fact to be explained that although Martynov talks so much about "calls to action", and even suggests "calls to action" as a special form of activity, he said not a word about *this* call? After this, was it not sheer philistinism on Martynov's part to allege that *Iskra* was *one-sided* because it did not issue sufficient "calls" to struggle for demands "promising palpable results"?

Our Economists, including *Rabocheye Dyelo*, were successful because they adapted themselves to the backward workers. But the Social-Democratic worker, the revolutionary worker (and the number of such workers is growing) will indignantly reject all this talk about struggle for demands "promising palpable results", etc., because he will understand that this is only a variation of the old song about adding a kopek to the ruble. Such a worker will say to his counsellors from *Rabochaya Mysl* and *Rabocheye Dyelo*: you are busying yourselves in vain, gentlemen, and shirking your proper duties, by meddling with such excessive zeal in a job that we can very well manage ourselves. There is nothing clever in your assertion that the Social-Democrats' task is to lend the economic struggle itself a political character; that is only the beginning, it is not the main task of the Social-Democrats. For all over the world, including Russia, *the police themselves often take the initiative in lending* the economic struggle a political character, and the workers themselves learn to understand whom the government supports.** The "economic struggle of the workers

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 414-19.—*Ed.*

** The demand "to lend the economic struggle itself a political character" most strikingly expresses *subservience to spontaneity* in the sphere of political activity. Very often the economic struggle *spontaneously* assumes a political character, that is to say, without the intervention of the "revolutionary bacilli—the intelligentsia", without the

against the employers and the government", about which you make as much fuss as if you had discovered a new America, is being waged in all parts of Russia, even the most remote, by the workers themselves who have heard about strikes, but who have heard almost nothing about socialism. The "activity" you want to stimulate among us workers, by advancing concrete demands that promise palpable results, we are already displaying and in our everyday, limited trade-union work we put forward these concrete demands, very often without any assistance whatever from the intellectuals. But *such* activity is not enough for us; we are not children to be fed on the thin gruel of "economic" politics alone; we want to know everything that others know, we want to learn the details of *all* aspects of political life and to take part *actively* in every single political event. In order that we may do this, the intellectuals must talk to us less of what we already know.* and tell us more about what we do not yet know

intervention of the class-conscious Social-Democrats. The economic struggle of the English workers, for instance, also assumed a political character without any intervention on the part of the socialists. The task of the Social-Democrats, however, is not exhausted by political agitation on an economic basis; their task is *to convert* trade-unionist politics into Social-Democratic political struggle, *to utilise* the sparks of political consciousness which the economic struggle generates among the workers, for the purpose of *raising* the workers to the level of *Social-Democratic* political consciousness. The Martynovs, however, instead of raising and stimulating the spontaneously awakening political consciousness of the workers, *bow to spontaneity* and repeat over and over *ad nauseam*, that the economic struggle "impels" the workers to realise their own lack of political rights. It is unfortunate, gentlemen, that the spontaneously awakening trade-unionist political consciousness does not "*impel*" you to an understanding of your Social-Democratic tasks.

* To prove that this imaginary speech of a worker to an Economist is based on fact, we shall refer to two witnesses who undoubtedly have direct knowledge of the working-class movement and who are least of all inclined to be partial towards us "doctrinaires"; for one witness is an Economist (who regards even *Rabocheye Dyelo* as a political organ!), and the other is a terrorist. The first witness is the author of a remarkably truthful and vivid article entitled "The St. Petersburg Working-Class Movement and the Practical Tasks of Social-Democracy", published in *Rabocheye Dyelo* No. 6. He divides the workers into the following categories: (1) class-conscious revolutionaries; (2) intermediate stratum; (3) the remaining masses. The intermediate stratum, he says, "is often more interested in questions of political life than in its own immediate economic interests, the connection

and what we can never learn from our factory and "economic" experience, namely, political knowledge. You intellectuals can acquire this knowledge, and it is your *duty* to bring it to us in a hundred- and a thousand-fold greater measure than you have done up to now; and you must bring it to us, not only in the form of discussions, pamphlets, and articles (which very often—pardon our frankness—are rather dull), but precisely in the form of vivid *exposures* of what our government and our governing classes are doing at this very moment in all spheres of life. Devote more zeal to carrying out this duty and *talk less about "raising the activity of the working masses"*. We are far more active than you think, and we are quite able to support, by open street fighting, even demands that do not promise any "palpable results" whatever. It is not for you to "raise" our activity, because *activity is precisely the thing you yourselves lack*. Bow less in subservience to spontaneity, and think more about raising *your own* activity, gentlemen!

D. WHAT IS THERE IN COMMON BETWEEN ECONOMISM AND TERRORISM?

In the last footnote we cited the opinion of an Economist and of a non-Social-Democratic terrorist, who showed themselves to be accidentally in agreement. Speaking generally, however, there is not an accidental, but a necessary, inherent connection between the two, of which we shall have need to speak later, and which must be mentioned here in

---

between which and the general social conditions it has long understood".... *Rabochaya Mysl* "is sharply criticised": "It keeps on repeating the same thing over and over again, things we have long known, read long ago." "Again nothing in the political review!" (pp. 30-31). But even the third stratum, "the younger and more sensitive section of the workers, less corrupted by the tavern and the church, who hardly ever have the opportunity of getting hold of political literature, discuss political events in a rambling way and ponder over the fragmentary news they get about student riots", etc. The terrorist writes as follows: "... They read over once or twice the petty details of factory life in other towns, not their own, and then they read no more ... dull, they find it.... To say nothing in a workers' paper about the government ... is to regard the workers as being little children.... The workers are not little children" (*Svoboda*, published by the Revolutionary-Socialist Group, pp. 69-70).

connection with the question of education for revolutionary activity. The Economists and the present-day terrorists have one common root, namely, *subservience to spontaneity*, with which we dealt in the preceding chapter as a general phenomenon and which we shall now examine in relation to its effect upon political activity and the political struggle. At first sight, our assertion may appear paradoxical, so great is the difference between those who stress the "drab everyday struggle" and those who call for the most self-sacrificing struggle of individuals. But this is no paradox. The Economists and the terrorists merely bow to different poles of spontaneity; the Economists bow to the spontaneity of "the labour movement pure and simple", while the terrorists bow to the spontaneity of the passionate indignation of intellectuals, who lack the ability or opportunity to connect the revolutionary struggle and the working-class movement into an integral whole. It is difficult indeed for those who have lost their belief, or who have never believed, that this is possible, to find some outlet for their indignation and revolutionary energy other than terror. Thus, both forms of subservience to spontaneity we have mentioned are nothing but *the beginning of the implementation* of the notorious *Credo* programme: Let the workers wage their "economic struggle against the employers and the government" (we apologise to the author of the *Credo* for expressing her views in Martynov's words. We think we have a right to do so since the *Credo*, too, says that in the economic struggle the workers "come up against the political régime"), and let the intellectuals conduct the political struggle by their own efforts—with the aid of terror, of course! This is an absolutely logical and inevitable *conclusion* which must be insisted on—*even though those* who are beginning to carry out this programme *do not themselves realise* that it is inevitable. Political activity has its logic quite apart from the consciousness of those who, with the best intentions, call either for terror or for lending the economic struggle itself a political character. The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and, in this case, good intentions cannot save one from being spontaneously drawn "along the line of least resistance", along the line of the *purely bourgeois Credo* programme. Surely it is no accident either that many Rus-

sian liberals—avowed liberals and liberals that wear the mask of Marxism—whole-heartedly sympathise with terror and try to foster the terrorist moods that have surged up in the present time.

The formation of the Revolutionary-Socialist *Svoboda* Group—which set itself the aim of helping the working-class movement in every possible way, but which included in its *programme* terror, and emancipation, so to speak, from Social-Democracy—once again confirmed the remarkable perspicacity of P. B. Axelrod, who *literally foretold* these results of Social-Democratic waverings *as far back as the end of 1897* (*Present Tasks and Tactics*), when he outlined his famous "two perspectives". All the subsequent disputes and disagreements among Russian Social-Democrats are contained, like a plant in the seed, in these two perspectives.*

From this point of view it also becomes clear why *Rabocheye Dyelo*, unable to withstand the spontaneity of Economism, has likewise been unable to withstand the spontaneity of terrorism. It is highly interesting to note here the specific arguments that *Svoboda* has advanced in defence of terrorism. It "completely denies" the deterrent role of terrorism (*The Regeneration of Revolutionism*, p. 64), but instead stresses its "excitative significance". This is characteristic, first, as representing one of the stages of the break-up and decline of the traditional (pre-Social-Democratic) cycle of ideas which insisted upon terrorism. The admission

* Martynov "conceives of another, more realistic [?] dilemma" (*Social-Democracy and the Working Class*, p. 19): "Either Social-Democracy takes over the direct leadership of the economic struggle of the proletariat and by that [!] transforms it into a revolutionary class struggle...." "By that", i.e., apparently by the direct leadership of the economic struggle. Can Martynov cite an instance in which leading the trade-union struggle *alone* has succeeded in transforming a trade-unionist movement into a revolutionary class movement? Can he not understand that in order to bring about this "transformation" we must actively take up the "direct leadership" of *all-sided* political agitation?... "Or the other perspective: Social-Democracy refrains from assuming the leadership of the economic struggle of the workers and so ... clips its own wings..." In *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s opinion, quoted above, it is *Iskra* that "refrains". We have seen, however, that the latter *does far more than Rabocheye Dyelo* to lead the economic struggle, but that, moreover, it does not confine itself thereto and *does not narrow down* its political tasks for its sake.

that the government cannot now be "terrified", and hence disrupted, by terror, is tantamount to a complete condemnation of terror as a system of struggle, as a sphere of activity sanctioned by the programme. Secondly, it is still more characteristic as an example of the failure to understand our immediate tasks in regard to "education for revolutionary activity". *Svoboda* advocates terror as a means of "exciting" the working-class movement and of giving it a "strong impetus". It is difficult to imagine an argument that more thoroughly disproves itself. Are there not enough outrages committed in Russian life without special "excitants" having to be invented? On the other hand, is it not obvious that those who are not, and cannot be, roused to excitement even by Russian tyranny will stand by "twiddling their thumbs" and watch a handful of terrorists engaged in single combat with the government? The fact is that the working masses are roused to a high pitch of excitement by the social evils in Russian life, but we are unable to gather, if one may so put it, and concentrate all these drops and streamlets of popular resentment that are brought forth to a far larger extent than we imagine by the conditions of Russian life, and that must be combined into a *single* gigantic torrent. That this can be accomplished is irrefutably proved by the enormous growth of the working-class movement and the eagerness, noted above, with which the workers clamour for political literature. On the other hand, calls for terror and calls to lend the economic struggle itself a political character are merely two different forms of *evading* the most pressing duty now resting upon Russian revolutionaries, namely, the organisation of comprehensive political agitation. *Svoboda* desires *to substitute* terror for agitation, openly admitting that "as soon as intensified and strenuous agitation is begun among the masses the excitative function of terror will be ended" (*The Regeneration of Revolutionism*, p. 68). This proves precisely that both the terrorists and the Economists *underestimate* the revolutionary activity of the masses, despite the striking evidence of the events that took place in the spring,* and whereas the one group goes out in

* The big street demonstrations which began in the spring of *1901*. (Author's note to the 1907 edition.—*Ed*.)

search of artificial "excitants", the other talks about "concrete demands". But both fail to devote sufficient attention to the development of *their own activity* in political agitation and in the organisation of political exposures. And no other work can serve as a *substitute* for this task either at the present time or at any other.

E. THE WORKING CLASS AS VANGUARD FIGHTER FOR DEMOCRACY

We have seen that the conduct of the broadest political agitation and, consequently, of all-sided political exposures is an absolutely necessary and a *paramount* task of our activity, if this activity is to be truly Social-Democratic. However, we arrived at this conclusion *solely* on the grounds of the pressing needs of the working class for political knowledge and political training. But such a presentation of the question is too narrow, for it ignores the general democratic tasks of Social-Democracy, in particular of present-day Russian Social-Democracy. In order to explain the point more concretely we shall approach the subject from an aspect that is "nearest" to the Economist, namely, from the practical aspect. "Everyone agrees" that it is necessary to develop the political consciousness of the working class. The question is, *how* that is to be done and what is required to do it. The economic struggle merely "impels" the workers to realise the government's attitude towards the working class. Consequently, *however much we may try* to "lend the economic, struggle itself a political character", we *shall never be able* to develop the political consciousness of the workers (to the level of Social-Democratic political consciousness) by keeping within the framework of the economic struggle, for *that framework is too narrow*. The Martynov formula has some value for us, not because it illustrates Martynov's aptitude for confusing things, but because it pointedly expresses the basic error that all the Economists commit, namely, their conviction that it is possible to develop the class political consciousness of the workers *from within*, so to speak, from their economic struggle, i.e., by making this struggle the exclusive (or, at least, the main) starting-point, by making it the exclusive (or, at least,

the main) basis. Such a view is radically wrong. Piqued by our polemics against them, the Economists refuse to ponder deeply over the origins of these disagreements, with the result that we simply cannot understand one another. It is as if we spoke in different tongues.

Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only from outside the economic struggle, from outside the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships of *all* classes and strata to the state and the government, the sphere of the interrelations between *all* classes. For that reason, the reply to the question as to what must be done to bring political knowledge to the workers cannot be merely the answer with which, in the majority of cases, the practical workers, especially those inclined towards Economism, mostly content themselves, namely: "To go among the workers." To bring political knowledge to the *workers* the Social-Democrats must *go among all classes of the population*; they must dispatch units of their army *in all directions*.

We deliberately select this blunt formula, we deliberately express ourselves in this sharply simplified manner, not because we desire to indulge in paradoxes, but in order to "impel" the Economists to a realisation of their tasks which they unpardonably ignore, to suggest to them strongly the difference between trade-unionist and Social-Democratic politics, which they refuse to understand. We therefore beg the reader not to get wrought up, but to hear us patiently to the end.

Let us take the type of Social-Democratic study circle that has become most widespread in the past few years and examine its work. It has "contacts with the workers" and rests content with this, issuing leaflets in which abuses in the factories, the government's partiality towards the capitalists, and the tyranny of the police are strongly condemned. At workers' meetings the discussions never, or rarely ever, go beyond the limits of these subjects. Extremely rare are the lectures and discussions held on the history of the revolutionary movement, on questions of the government's home and foreign policy, on questions of the economic evo-

lution of Russia and of Europe, on the position of the various classes in modern society, etc. As to systematically acquiring and extending contact with other classes of society, no one even dreams of that. In fact, the ideal leader, as the majority of the members of such circles picture him, is something far more in the nature of a trade-union secretary than a socialist political leader. For the secretary of any, say English, trade union always helps the workers to carry on the economic struggle, he helps them to expose factory abuses, explains the injustice of the laws and of measures that hamper the freedom to strike and to picket (i.e., to warn all and sundry that a strike is proceeding at a certain factory), explains the partiality of arbitration court judges who belong to the bourgeois classes, etc., etc. In a word, every trade-union secretary conducts and helps to conduct "the economic struggle against the employers and the government". It cannot be too strongly maintained that *this is still not* Social-Democracy, that the Social-Democrat's ideal should not be the trade-union secretary, but *the tribune of the people*, who is able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it appears, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; who is able to generalise all these manifestations and produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; who is able to take advantage of every event, however small, in order to set forth *before all* his socialist convictions and his democratic demands, in order to clarify for *all* and everyone the world-historic significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. Compare, for example, a leader like Robert Knight (the well-known secretary and leader of the Boiler-Makers' Society, one of the most powerful trade unions in England), with Wilhelm Liebknecht, and try to apply to them the contrasts that Martynov draws in his controversy with *Iskra*. You will see—I am running through Martynov's article—that Robert Knight engaged more in "calling the masses to certain concrete actions" (Martynov, op. cit., p. 39), while Wilhelm Liebknecht engaged more in "the revolutionary elucidation of the whole of the present system or partial manifestations of it" (38-39); that Robert Knight "formulated the immediate demands of the proletariat and indicated the means

by which they can be achieved" (41), whereas Wilhelm Liebknecht, while doing this, did not hold back from "simultaneously guiding the activities of various opposition strata", "dictating a positive programme of action for them"* (41); that Robert Knight strove "as far as possible to lend the economic struggle itself a political character" (42) and was excellently able "to submit to the government concrete demands promising certain palpable results" (43), whereas Liebknecht engaged to a much greater degree in "one-sided" "exposures" (40); that Robert Knight attached more significance to the "forward march of the drab everyday struggle" (61), whereas Liebknecht attached more significance to the "propaganda of brilliant and completed ideas" (61); that Liebknecht converted the paper he was directing into "an organ of revolutionary opposition that exposed the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs, insofar as it affected the interests of the most varied strata of the population" (63), whereas Robert Knight "worked for the cause of the working class in close organic connection with the proletarian struggle" (63)—if by "close and organic connection" is meant the subservience to spontaneity which we examined above, by taking the examples of Krichevsky and Martynov—and "restricted the sphere of his influence", convinced, of course, as is Martynov, that "by doing so he deepened that influence" (63). In a word, you will see that *de facto* Martynov reduces Social-Democracy to the level of trade-unionism, though he does so, of course, not because he does not desire the good of Social-Democracy, but simply because he is a little too much in a hurry to render Plekhanov more profound, instead of taking the trouble to understand him.

Let us return, however, to our theses. We said that a Social-Democrat, if he really believes it necessary to develop comprehensively the political consciousness of the proletariat, must "go among all classes of the population". This gives rise to the questions: how is this to be done? have we enough forces to do this? is there a basis for such work among all the other classes? will this not mean a re-

* For example, during the Franco-Prussian War, Liebknecht dictated a programme of action *for the whole of democracy*; to an even greater extent Marx and Engels did this in 1848.

treat, or lead to a retreat, from the class point of view? Let us deal with these questions.

We must "go among all classes of the population" as theoreticians, as propagandists, as agitators, and as organisers. No one doubts that the theoretical work of Social-Democrats should aim at studying all the specific features of the social and political condition of the various classes. But extremely little is done in this direction as compared with the work that is done in studying the specific features of factory life. In the committees and study circles, one can meet people who are immersed in the study even of some special branch of the metal industry; but one can hardly ever find members of organisations (obliged, as often happens, for some reason or other to give up practical work) who are especially engaged in gathering material on some pressing question of social and political life in our country which could serve as a means for conducting Social-Democratic work among other strata of the population. In dwelling upon the fact that the majority of the present-day leaders of the working-class movement lack training, we cannot refrain from mentioning training in this respect also, for it too is bound up with the "Economist" conception of "close organic connection with the proletarian struggle". The principal thing, of course, is *propaganda* and *agitation* among all strata of the people. The work of the West European Social-Democrat is in this respect facilitated by the public meetings and rallies which *all* are free to attend, and by the fact that in parliament he addresses the representatives of *all* classes. We have neither a parliament nor freedom of assembly; nevertheless, we are able to arrange meetings of workers who desire to listen to *a Social-Democrat*. We must also find ways and means of calling meetings of representatives of all social classes that desire to listen to *a democrat*; for he is no Social-Democrat who forgets in practice that "the Communists support every revolutionary movement", that we are obliged for that reason to expound and emphasise *general democratic tasks before the whole people*, without for a moment concealing our socialist convictions. He is no Social-Democrat who forgets in practice his obligation to be *ahead of all* in raising, accentuating, and solving every general democratic question.

"But everyone agrees with this!" the impatient reader will exclaim, and the new instructions adopted by the last conference of the Union Abroad for the Editorial Board of *Rabocheye Dyelo* definitely say: "All events of social and political life that affect the proletariat either directly as a special class or as *the vanguard of all the revolutionary forces in the struggle for freedom* should serve as subjects for political propaganda and agitation" (*Two Conferences*, p. 17, our italics). Yes, these are very true and very good words, and we would be fully satisfied if *Rabocheye Dyelo understood* them *and if it refrained from saying in the next breath things that contradict them*. For it is not enough to call ourselves the "vanguard", the advanced contingent; we must act in such a way that *all* the other contingents recognise and are obliged to admit that we are marching in the vanguard. And we ask the reader: Are the representatives of the other "contingents" such fools as to take our word for it when we say that we are the "vanguard"? Just picture to yourselves the following: a Social-Democrat comes to the "contingent" of Russian educated radicals, or liberal constitutionalists, and says, We are the vanguard; "the task confronting us now is, as far as possible, to lend the economic struggle itself a political character". The radical, or constitutionalist, if he is at all intelligent (and there are many intelligent men among Russian radicals and constitutionalists), would only smile at such a speech and would say (to himself, of course, for in the majority of cases he is an experienced diplomat): "Your 'vanguard' must be made up of simpletons. They do not even understand that it is our task, the task of the progressive representatives of bourgeois democracy to lend the workers' economic struggle *itself* a political character. Why, we too, like the West-European bourgeois, want to draw the workers into politics, *but only into trade-unionist*, *not into Social-Democratic politics*. Trade-unionist politics of the working class is precisely *bourgeois politics* of the working class, and this 'vanguard's' formulation of its task is the formulation of trade-unionist politics! Let them call themselves Social-Democrats to their heart's content, I am not a child to get excited over a label. But they must not fall under the influence of those pernicious orthodox doctrinaires, let them allow 'freedom of

criticism' to those who unconsciously are driving Social-Democracy into trade-unionist channels."

And the faint smile of our constitutionalist will turn into Homeric laughter when he learns that the Social-Democrats who talk of Social-Democracy as the vanguard, today, when spontaneity almost completely dominates our movement, fear nothing so much as "belittling the spontaneous element", as "underestimating the significance of the forward movement of the drab everyday struggle, as compared with the propaganda of brilliant and completed ideas", etc., etc.! A "vanguard" which fears that consciousness will outstrip spontaneity, which fears to put forward a bold "plan" that would compel general recognition even among those who differ with us. Are they not confusing "vanguard" with "rearguard"?

Indeed, let us examine the following piece of reasoning by Martynov. On page 40 he says that *Iskra* is one-sided in its tactics of exposing abuses, that "however much we may spread distrust and hatred of the government, we shall not achieve our aim until we have succeeded in developing sufficient active social energy for its overthrow". This, it may be said parenthetically, is the familiar solicitude for the activation of the masses, with a simultaneous striving to restrict one's own activity. But that is not the main point at the moment. Martynov speaks here, accordingly, of *revolutionary* energy ("for overthrowing"). And what conclusion does he arrive at? Since in ordinary times various social strata inevitably march separately, "it is, therefore, clear that we Social-Democrats cannot simultaneously guide the activities of various opposition strata, we cannot dictate to them a positive programme of action, we cannot point out to them in what manner they should wage a day-to-day struggle for their interests.... The liberal strata will themselves take care of the active struggle for their immediate interests, the struggle that will bring them face to face with our political régime" (p. 41). Thus, having begun with talk about revolutionary energy, about the active struggle for the overthrow of the autocracy, Martynov immediately turns toward trade-union energy and active struggle for immediate interests! It goes without saying that we cannot guide the struggle of the students, liberals, etc., for their

"immediate interests"; but this was not the point at issue, most worthy Economist! The point we were discussing was the possible and necessary participation of various social strata in the overthrow of the autocracy; and not only are we *able*, but it is our bounden duty, to guide *these* "activities of the various opposition strata", if we desire to be the "vanguard". Not only will our students and liberals, etc., themselves take care of "the struggle that brings them face to face with our political régime"; the police and the officials of the autocratic government will see to this first and foremost. But if "we" desire to be front-rank democrats, we must make it our concern *to direct* the thoughts of those who are dissatisfied only with conditions at the university, or in the Zemstvo, etc., to the idea that the entire political system is worthless. *We* must take upon ourselves the task of organising an all-round political struggle under the leadership of *our* Party in such a manner as to make it possible for all oppositional strata to render their fullest support to the struggle and to our Party. *We* must train our Social-Democratic practical workers to become political leaders, able to guide all the manifestations of this all-round struggle, able at the right time to "dictate a positive programme of action" for the aroused students, the discontented Zemstvo people, the incensed religious sects, the offended elementary schoolteachers, etc., etc. For that reason, Martynov's assertion that "with regard to these, we can function *merely in the negative* role of exposers of abuses ... we can *only* dissipate their hopes in various government commissions" *is completely false* (our italics). By saying this, Martynov shows that he *absolutely fails to understand* the role that the revolutionary "vanguard" must really play. If the reader bears this in mind, he will be clear as to *the real meaning* of Martynov's concluding remarks: "*Iskra* is the organ of the revolutionary opposition which exposes the state of affairs in our country, particularly the political state of affairs, insofar as it affects the interests of the most varied strata of the population. We, however, work and will continue to work for the cause of the working class in close organic contact with the proletarian struggle. By restricting the sphere of our active influence we deepen that influence" (63). The true sense of this conclusion is as follows: *Iskra* desires *to elevate* the

trade-unionist politics of the working class (to which, through misconception, through lack of training, or through conviction, our practical workers frequently confine themselves) to the level of Social-Democratic politics. *Rabocheye Dyelo*, however, desires *to degrade* Social-Democratic politics to trade-unionist politics. Moreover, it assures the world that the two positions are "entirely compatible within the common cause" (63). *O, sancta simplicitas!*

To proceed. Have we sufficient forces to direct our propaganda and agitation among *all* social classes? Most certainly. Our Economists, who are frequently inclined to deny this, lose sight of the gigantic progress our movement has made from (approximately) 1894 to 1901. Like real "tail-enders" they often go on living in the bygone stages of the movement's inception. In the earlier period, indeed, we had astonishingly few forces, and it was perfectly natural and legitimate then to devote ourselves exclusively to activities among the workers and to condemn severely any deviation from this course. The entire task then was to consolidate our position in the working class. At the present time, however, gigantic forces have been attracted to the movement. The best representatives of the younger generation of the educated classes are coming over to us. Everywhere in the provinces there are people, resident there by dint of circumstance, who have taken part in the movement in the past or who desire to do so now and who, are gravitating towards Social-Democracy (whereas in 1894 one could count the Social-Democrats on the fingers of one's hand). A basic political and organisational shortcoming of our movement is our *inability* to utilise all these forces and give them appropriate work (we shall deal with this more fully in the next chapter). The overwhelming majority of these forces entirely lack the opportunity of "going among the workers", so that there are no grounds for fearing that we shall divert forces from our main work. In order to be able to provide the workers with real, comprehensive, and live political knowledge, we must have "our own people", Social-Democrats, everywhere, among all social strata, and in all positions from which we can learn the inner springs of our state mechanism. Such people are required, not only for propaganda and agitation, but in a still larger measure for organisation.

Is there a basis for activity among all classes of the population? Whoever doubts this lags in his consciousness behind the spontaneous awakening of the masses. The working-class movement has aroused and is continuing to arouse discontent in some, hopes of support for the opposition in others, and in still others the realisation that the autocracy is unbearable and must inevitably fall. We would be "politicians" and Social-Democrats in name only (as all too often happens in reality), if we failed to realise that our task is to utilise every manifestation of discontent, and to gather and turn to the best account every protest, however small. This is quite apart from the fact that the millions of the labouring peasantry, handicraftsmen, petty artisans, etc., would always listen eagerly to the speech of any Social-Democrat who is at all qualified. Indeed, is there a single social class in which there are no individuals, groups, or circles that are discontented with the lack of rights and with tyranny and, therefore, accessible to the propaganda of Social-Democrats as the spokesmen of the most pressing general democratic needs? To those who desire to have a clear idea of what the political agitation of a Social-Democrat among *all* classes and strata of the population should be like, we would point to *political exposures* in the broad sense of the word as the principal (but, of course, not the sole) form of this agitation.

"We must arouse in every section of the population that is at all politically conscious a passion for *political* exposure," I wrote in my article "Where To Begin" [*Iskra*, May (No. 4), 1901], with which I shall deal in greater detail later. "We must not be discouraged by the fact that the voice of political exposure is today so feeble, timid, and infrequent. This is not because of a wholesale submission to police despotism, but because those who are able and ready to make exposures have no tribune from which to speak, no eager and encouraging audience, they do not see anywhere among the people that force to which it would be worth while directing their complaint against the 'omnipotent' Russian Government.... We are now in a position to provide a tribune for the nation-wide exposure of the tsarist government, and it is our duty to do this. That tribune must be a Social-Democratic newspaper."*

The ideal audience for political exposure is the working class, which is first and foremost in need of all-round and

* See present volume, pp. 21-22.—*Ed.*

live political knowledge, and is most capable of converting this knowledge into active struggle, even when that struggle does not promise "palpable results". A tribune for *nation-wide* exposures can be only an All-Russian newspaper. "Without a political organ, a political movement deserving that name is inconceivable in the Europe of today"; in this respect Russia must undoubtedly be included in present-day Europe. The press long ago became a power in our country, otherwise the government would not spend tens of thousands of rubles to bribe it and to subsidise the Katkovs and Meshcherskys. And it is no novelty in autocratic Russia for the underground press to break through the wall of censorship and *compel* the legal and conservative press to speak openly of it. This was the case in the seventies and even in the fifties. How much broader and deeper are now the sections of the people willing to read the illegal underground press, and to learn from it "how to live and how to die", to use the expression of a worker who sent a letter to *Iskra* (No. 7).[172] Political exposures are as much a declaration of war against the *government* as economic exposures are a declaration of war against the factory owners. The moral significance of this declaration of war will be all the greater, the wider and more powerful the campaign of exposure will be and the more numerous and determined the social *class* that has *declared war in order to begin the war*. Hence, political exposures in themselves serve as a powerful instrument for *disintegrating* the system we oppose, as a means for diverting from the enemy his casual or temporary allies, as a means for spreading hostility and distrust among the permanent partners of the autocracy.

In our time only a party that will *organise* really *nation-wide* exposures can become the vanguard of the revolutionary forces. The word "nation-wide" has a very profound meaning. The overwhelming majority of the non-working-class exposers (be it remembered that in order to become the vanguard, we must attract other classes) are sober politicians and level-headed men of affairs. They know perfectly well how dangerous it is to "complain" even against a minor official, let alone against the "omnipotent" Russian Government. And they will come *to us* with their complaints only when they see that these complaints can really have effect, and that

FROM MARX TO MAO
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

we represent *a political force*. In order to become such a force in the eyes of outsiders, much persistent and stubborn work is required *to raise* our own consciousness, initiative, and energy. To accomplish this it is not enough to attach a "vanguard" label to rearguard theory and practice.

But if we have to undertake the organisation of a really nation-wide exposure of the government, in what way will then the class character of our movement be expressed?—the overzealous advocate of "close organic contact with the proletarian struggle" will ask us, as indeed he does. The reply is manifold: we Social-Democrats will organise these nation-wide exposures; all questions raised by the agitation will he explained in a consistently Social-Democratic spirit, without any concessions to deliberate or undeliberate distortions of Marxism; the all-round political agitation will be conducted by a party which unites into one inseparable whole the assault on the government in the name of the entire people, the revolutionary training of the proletariat, and the safeguarding of its political independence, the guidance of the economic struggle of the working class, and the utilisation of all its spontaneous conflicts with its exploiters which rouse and bring into our camp increasing numbers of the proletariat.

But a most characteristic feature of Economism is its failure to understand this connection, more, this identity of the most pressing need of the proletariat (a comprehensive political education through the medium of political agitation and political exposures) with the need of the general democratic movement. This lack of understanding is expressed, not only in "Martynovite" phrases, but in the references to a supposedly class point of view identical in meaning with these phrases. Thus, the authors of the "Economist" letter in *Iskra*, No. 12, state*: "This basic drawback

* Lack of space has prevented us from replying in detail, in *Iskra*, to this letter, which is highly characteristic of the Economists. We were very glad at its appearance, for the allegations that *Iskra* did not maintain a consistent class point of view had reached us long before that from various sources, and we were waiting for an appropriate occasion, or for a formulated expression of this fashionable charge, to give our reply. Moreover, it is our habit to reply to attacks, not by defence, but by counter-attack.

of *Iskra* [overestimation of ideology] is also the cause of its inconsistency on the question of the attitude of Social-Democracy to the various social classes and tendencies. By theoretical reasoning [not by "the growth of Party tasks, which grow together with the Party"], *Iskra* solved the problem of the immediate transition to the struggle against absolutism. In all probability it senses the difficulty of such a task for the workers under the present state of affairs [not only senses, but knows full well that this task appears less difficult to the workers than to the "Economist" intellectuals with their nursemaid concern, for the workers are prepared to fight even for demands which, to use the language of the never-to-be-forgotten Martynov, do not "promise palpable results"] but lacking the patience to wait until the workers will have gathered sufficient forces for this struggle, *Iskra* begins to seek allies in the ranks of the liberals and intellectuals"....

Yes, we have indeed lost all "patience" "waiting" for the blessed time, long promised us by diverse "conciliators", when the Economists will have stopped charging the workers with *their own* backwardness and justifying their own lack of energy with allegations that the workers lack strength. We ask our Economists: What do they mean by "the gathering of working-class strength for the struggle"? Is it not evident that this means the political training of the workers, so that *all* the aspects of our vile autocracy are revealed to them? And is it not clear that *precisely for this work* we need "allies in the ranks of the liberals and intellectuals", who are prepared to join us in the exposure of the political attack on the Zemstvos, on the teachers, on the statisticians, on the students, etc.? Is this surprisingly "intricate mechanism" really so difficult to understand? Has not P. B. Axelrod constantly repeated since 1897 that "the task before the Russian Social-Democrats of acquiring adherents and direct and indirect allies among the non-proletarian classes will be solved principally and primarily by the character of the propagandist activities conducted among the proletariat itself"? But the Martynovs and the other Economists continue to imagine that "by economic struggle against the employers and the government" the workers must *first* gather strength (for trade-unionist politics) and *then*

"go over"—we presume from trade-unionist "training for activity"—to Social-Democratic activity!

"...In this quest," continue the Economists, "*Iskra* not infrequently departs from the class point of view, obscures class antagonisms, and puts into the forefront the common nature of the discontent with the government, although the causes and the degree of the discontent vary considerably among the 'allies'. Such, for example, is *Iskra*'s attitude towards the Zemstvo...." *Iskra*, it is alleged, "promises the nobles that are dissatisfied with the government's sops the assistance of the working class, but it does not say a word about the class antagonism that exists between these social strata." If the reader will turn to the article "The Autocracy and the Zemstvo" (*Iskra*, Nos. 2 and 4), to which, *in all probability*, the authors of the letter refer, he will find that they* deal with the attitude of the *government* towards the "mild agitation of the bureaucratic Zemstvo, which is based on the social-estates", and towards the "independent activity of even the propertied classes". The article states that the workers cannot look on indifferently while the government is waging a struggle against the Zemstvo, and the Zemstvos are called upon to stop making mild speeches and to speak firmly and resolutely when revolutionary Social-Democracy confronts the government in all its strength. What the authors of the letter do not agree with here is not clear. Do they think that the workers will "not understand" the phrases "propertied classes" and "bureaucratic Zemstvo based on the social-estates"? Do they think that *urging* the Zemstvo to abandon mild speeches and to speak firmly is "overestimating ideology"? Do they imagine the workers can "gather strength" for the struggle against the autocracy if they know nothing about the attitude of the autocracy towards the Zemstvo *as well*? All this too remains unknown. One thing alone is clear and that is that the authors of the letter have a very vague idea of what the political tasks of Social-Democracy are. This is revealed still more clearly by their remark: "Such, too, is *Iskra*'s attitude towards the student movement" (i.e., it also "obscures the class antag-

* In the interval *between* these articles there was one (*Iskra*, No. 3), which dealt especially with class antagonisms in the countryside. (See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 420-28.—*Ed.*)

onisms"). Instead of calling on the workers to declare by means of public demonstrations that the real breeding-place of unbridled violence, disorder, and outrage is not the university youth but the Russian Government (*Iskra*, No. 2*), we ought probably to have inserted arguments in the spirit of *Rabochaya Mysl*! Such ideas were expressed by Social-Democrats in the autumn of 1901, after the events of February and March, on the eve of a fresh upsurge of the student movement, which reveals that even in this sphere the "spontaneous" protest against the autocracy is *outstripping* the conscious Social-Democratic leadership of the movement. The spontaneous striving of the workers to defend the students who are being assaulted by the police and the Cossacks surpasses the conscious activity of the Social-Democratic organisation!

"And yet in other articles," continue the authors of the letter, "*Iskra* sharply condemns all compromise and defends, for instance, the intolerant conduct of the Guesdists." We would advise those who are wont so conceitedly and frivolously to declare that the present disagreements among the Social-Democrats are unessential and do not justify a split, to ponder these words. Is it possible for people to work together in the same organisation, when some among them contend that we have done extremely little to explain the hostility of the autocracy to the various classes and to inform the workers of the opposition displayed by the various social strata to the autocracy, while others among them see in this clarification a "compromise"—evidently a compromise with the theory of "economic struggle against the employers and the government"?

We urged the necessity of carrying the class struggle into the rural districts in connection with the fortieth anniversary of the emancipation of the peasantry (issue No. 3** and spoke of the irreconcilability of the local government bodies and the autocracy in relation to Witte's secret Memorandum (No. 4). In connection with the new law we attacked the feudal landlords and the government which serves them (No. 8***) and we welcomed the illegal Zemstvo

---

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 414-19.—*Ed.*
** See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 420-28.—*Ed.*
*** See present volume, pp. 95-100.—*Ed.*

congress. We urged the Zemstvo to pass over from abject petitions (No. 8*) to struggle. We encouraged the students, who had begun to understand the need for the political struggle, and to undertake this struggle (No. 3), while, at the same time, we lashed out at the "outrageous incomprehension" revealed by the adherents of the "purely student" movement, who called upon the students to abstain from participating in the street demonstrations (No. 3, in connection with the manifesto issued by the Executive Committee of the Moscow students on February 25). We exposed the "senseless dreams" and the "lying hypocrisy" of the cunning liberals of *Rossiya*[173] (No. 5), while pointing to the violent fury with which the government-gaoler persecuted "peaceful writers, aged professors, scientists, and well-known liberal Zemstvo members" (No. 5, "Police Raid on Literature"). We exposed the real significance of the programme of "state protection for the welfare of the workers" and welcomed the "valuable admission" that "it is better, by granting reforms from above, to forestall the demand for such reforms from below than to wait for those demands to be put forward" (No. 6**). We encouraged the protesting statisticians (No. 7) and censured the strike-breaking statisticians (No. 9). He who sees in these tactics an obscuring of the class-consciousness of the proletariat and *a compromise with liberalism* reveals his utter failure to understand the true significance of the programme of the *Credo* and *carries out that programme de facto*, however much he may repudiate it. For by *such an approach* he drags Social-Democracy towards the "economic struggle against the employers and the government" and *yields to liberalism*, abandons the task of actively intervening in *every* "liberal" issue and of determining *his own*, Social-Democratic, attitude towards this question.

F. ONCE MORE "SLANDERERS", ONCE MORE "MYSTIFIERS"

These polite expressions, as the reader will recall, belong to *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which in this way answers our charge that it "is indirectly preparing the ground for convert-

* See present volume, pp. 101-02.—*Ed.*
** See present volume, pp. 87-88.—*Ed.*

ing the working-class movement into an instrument of bourgeois democracy". In its simplicity of heart *Rabocheye Dyelo* decided that this accusation was nothing more than a polemical sally: these malicious doctrinaires are bent on saying all sorts of unpleasant things about us, and, what can be more unpleasant than being an instrument of bourgeois democracy? And so they print in bold type a "refutation": "Nothing but downright slander", "mystification", "mummery" (*Two Conferences*, pp. 30, 31, 33). Like Jove, *Rabocheye Dyelo* (although bearing little resemblance to that deity) is wrathful because it is wrong, and proves by its hasty abuse that it is incapable of understanding its opponents' mode of reasoning. And yet, with only a little reflection it would have understood why *any* subservience to the spontaneity of the mass movement and *any* degrading of Social-Democratic politics to the level of trade-unionist politics mean preparing the ground for converting the working-class movement into an instrument of bourgeois democracy. The spontaneous working-class movement is by itself able to create (and inevitably does create) only trade-unionism, and working-class trade-unionist politics is precisely working-class bourgeois politics. The fact that the working class participates in the political struggle, and even in the political revolution, does not in itself make its politics Social-Democratic politics. Will *Rabocheye Dyelo* make bold to deny this? Will it, at long last, publicly, plainly, and without equivocation explain how it understands the urgent questions of international and of Russian Social-Democracy? Hardly. It will never do anything of the kind, because it holds fast to the trick, which might be described as the "not here" method—"It's not me, it's not my horse, I'm not the driver. We are not Economists; *Rabochaya Mysl* does not stand for Economism; there is no Economism at all in Russia." This is a remarkably adroit and "political" trick, which suffers from the slight defect, however, that the publications practising it are usually nicknamed, "At your service, sir".

Rabocheye Dyelo imagines that bourgeois democracy in Russia is, in general, merely a "phantom" (*Two Conferences*, p. 32).* Happy people! Ostrich-like, they bury their heads

* There follows a reference to the "concrete Russian conditions which fatalistically impel the working-class movement on to the revo-

in the sand and imagine that everything around has disappeared. Liberal publicists who month after month proclaim to the world their triumph over the collapse and even the disappearance of Marxism; liberal newspapers (*S. Peterburgskiye Vedomosti*,[174] *Russkiye Vedomosti*, and many others) which encourage the liberals who bring to the workers the Brentano[175] conception of the class struggle and the trade-unionist conception of politics; the galaxy of critics of Marxism, whose real tendencies were so very well disclosed by the *Credo* and whose literary products alone circulate in Russia without let or hindrance; the revival of revolutionary *non*-Social-Democratic tendencies, particularly after the February and March events—all these, apparently, are just phantoms! All these have nothing at all to do with bourgeois democracy!

Rabocheye Dyelo and the authors of the Economist letter published in *Iskra*, No. 12, should "ponder over the reason why the events of the spring brought about such a revival of revolutionary non-Social-Democratic tendencies instead of increasing the authority and the prestige of Social-Democracy".

The reason lies in the fact that we failed to cope with our tasks. The masses of the workers proved to be more active than we. We lacked adequately trained revolutionary leaders and organisers possessed of a thorough knowledge of the mood prevailing among all the opposition strata and able to head the movement, to turn a spontaneous demonstration into a political one, broaden its political character, etc. Under such circumstances, our backwardness will inevitably be utilised by the more mobile and more energetic non-Social-Democratic revolutionaries, and the workers, however energetically and self-sacrificingly they may fight the police and the troops, however revolutionary their actions may be, will prove to be merely a force support-

---

lutionary path". But these people refuse to understand that the revolutionary path of the working-class movement might not be a Social-Democratic path. When absolutism reigned, the entire West-European bourgeoisie "impelled", deliberately impelled, the workers on to the path of revolution. We Social-Democrats, however, cannot be satisfied with that. And if we, by any means whatever, degrade Social-Democratic politics to the level of spontaneous trade-unionist politics, we thereby play into the hands of bourgeois democracy.

ing those revolutionaries, the rearguard of bourgeois democracy, and not the Social-Democratic vanguard. Let us take, for example, the German Social-Democrats, whose weak aspects alone our Economists desire to emulate. Why is there *not a single* political event in Germany that does not add to the authority and prestige of Social-Democracy? Because Social-Democracy is always found to be in advance of all others in furnishing the most revolutionary appraisal of every given event and in championing every protest against tyranny. It does not lull itself with arguments that the economic struggle brings the workers to realise that they have no political rights and that the concrete conditions unavoidably impel the working-class movement on to the path of revolution. It intervenes in every sphere and in every question of social and political life; in the matter of Wilhelm's refusal to endorse a bourgeois progressist as city mayor (our Economists have not yet managed to educate the Germans to the understanding that such an act is, in fact, a compromise with liberalism!); in the matter of the law against "obscene" publications and pictures; in the matter of governmental influence on the election of professors, etc., etc. Everywhere the Social-Democrats are found in the forefront, rousing political discontent among all classes, rousing the sluggards, stimulating the laggards, and providing a wealth of material for the development of the political consciousness and the political activity of the proletariat. As a result, even the avowed enemies of socialism are filled with respect for this advanced political fighter, and not infrequently an important document from bourgeois, and even from bureaucratic and Court circles, makes its way by some miraculous means into the editorial office of *Vorwärts*.

This, then, is the resolution of the seeming "contradiction" that surpasses *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s powers of understanding to such an extent that it can only throw up its hands and cry, "Mummery!" Indeed, just think of it: We, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, regard the *mass* working-class movement as the *corner-stone* (and say so in bold type!); we warn all and sundry against belittling the significance of the element of spontaneity; we desire to lend the economic struggle itself—*itself*—a political character; we desire to maintain close and organic contact

with the proletarian struggle. And yet we are told that we are preparing the ground for the conversion of the working-class movement into an instrument of bourgeois democracy! And who are they that presume to say this? People who "compromise" with liberalism by intervening in every "liberal" issue (what a gross misunderstanding of "organic contact with the proletarian struggle"!), by devoting so much attention to the students and even (oh horror!) to the Zemstvos! People who in general wish to devote a greater percentage (compared with the Economists) of their efforts to activity among non-proletarian classes of the population! What is this but "mummery"?

Poor *Rabocheye Dyelo*! Will it ever find the solution to this perplexing puzzle?

IV

THE PRIMITIVENESS OF THE ECONOMISTS AND THE ORGANISATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARIES

Rabocheye Dyelo's assertions, which we have analysed, that the economic struggle is the most widely applicable means of political agitation and that our task now is to lend the economic struggle itself a political character, etc., express a narrow view, not only of our political, but also of our *organisational* tasks. The "economic struggle against the employers and the government" does not at all require an All-Russian centralised organisation, and hence this struggle can never give rise to such an organisation as will combine, in one general assault, all the manifestations of political opposition, protest, and indignation, an organisation that will consist of professional revolutionaries and be led by the real political leaders of the entire people. This stands to reason. The character of any organisation is naturally and inevitably determined by the content of its activity. Consequently, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, by the assertions analysed above, sanctifies and legitimises not only narrowness of political activity, but also of organisational work. In this case, *Rabocheye Dyelo*, as always, proves itself an organ whose consciousness yields to spontaneity. Yet subservience to spontaneously developing forms of organisation,

failure to realise the narrowness and primitiveness of our organisational work, of our "handicraft" methods in this most important sphere, failure to realise this, I say, is a veritable ailment from which our movement suffers. It is not an ailment that comes with decline, but one, of course, that comes with growth. It is however at the present time, when the wave of spontaneous indignation, as it were, is sweeping over us, leaders and organisers of the movement, that an irreconcilable struggle must be waged against all defence of backwardness, against any legitimation of narrowness in this matter. It is particularly necessary to arouse in all who participate in practical work, or are preparing to take up that work, discontent with the *amateurism* prevailing among us and an unshakable determination to rid ourselves of it.

A. WHAT IS PRIMITIVENESS?

We shall try to answer this question by giving a brief description of the activity of a typical Social-Democratic study circle of the period 1894-1901. We have noted that the entire student youth of the period was absorbed in Marxism. Of course, these students were not only, or even not so much, interested in Marxism as a theory; they were interested in it as an answer to the question, "What is to be done?", as a call to take the field against the enemy. These new warriors marched to battle with astonishingly primitive equipment and training. In a vast number of cases they had almost no equipment and absolutely no training. They marched to war like peasants from the plough, armed only with clubs. A students' circle establishes contacts with workers and sets to work, without any connection with the old members of the movement, without any connection with study circles in other districts, or even in other parts of the same city (or in other educational institutions), without any organisation of the various divisions of revolutionary work, without any systematic plan of activity covering any length of time. The circle gradually expands its propaganda and agitation; by its activities it wins the sympathies of fairly large sections of workers and of a certain section of the educated strata, which provide it with money and from among

whom the "committee" recruits new groups of young people. The attractive power of the committee (or League of Struggle) grows, its sphere of activity becomes wider, and the committee expands this activity quite spontaneously; the very people who a year or a few months previously spoke at the students' circle gatherings and discussed the question, "Whither?", who established and maintained contacts with the workers and wrote and published leaflets, now, establish contacts with other groups of revolutionaries, procure literature, set to work to publish a local newspaper, begin to talk of organising a demonstration, and finally turn to open warfare (which may, according to circumstances, take the form of issuing the first agitational leaflet or the first issue of a newspaper, or of organising the first demonstration). Usually the initiation of such actions ends in an immediate and complete fiasco. Immediate and complete, because this open warfare was not the result of a systematic and carefully thought-out and gradually prepared plan for a prolonged and stubborn struggle, but simply the result of the spontaneous growth of traditional study circle work; because, naturally, the police, in almost every case, knew the principal leaders of the local movement, since they had already "gained a reputation" for themselves in their student days, and the police waited only for the right moment to make their raid. They deliberately allowed the study circle sufficient time to develop its work so that they might, obtain a palpable *corpus delicti*, and they always permitted several of the persons known to them to remain at liberty "for breeding" (which, as far as I know, is the technical term used both by our people and by the gendarmes). One cannot help comparing this kind of warfare with that conducted by a mass of peasants, armed with clubs, against modern troops. And one can only wonder at the vitality of the movement which expanded, grew, and scored victories despite the total lack of training on the part of the fighters. True, from the historical point of view, the primitiveness of equipment was not only inevitable at first, but *even legitimate* as one of the conditions for the wide recruiting of fighters, but as soon as serious war operations began (and they began in fact with the strikes in the summer of 1896), the defects in our fighting organisations made themselves felt to an ever-increasing

degree. The government, at first thrown into confusion and committing a number of blunders (e.g., its appeal to the public describing the misdeeds of the socialists, or the banishment of workers from the capitals to provincial industrial centres), very soon adapted itself to the new conditions of the struggle and managed to deploy well its perfectly equipped detachments of *agents provocateurs*, spies, and gendarmes. Raids became so frequent, affected such a vast number of people, and cleared out the local study circles so thoroughly that the masses of the workers lost literally all their leaders, the movement assumed an amazingly sporadic character, and it became utterly impossible to establish continuity and coherence in the work. The terrible dispersion of the local leaders; the fortuitous character of the study circle memberships; the lack of training in, and the narrow outlook on, theoretical, political, and organisational questions were all the inevitable result of the conditions described above. Things have reached such a pass that in several places the workers, because of our lack of self-restraint and the inability to maintain secrecy, begin to lose faith in the intellectuals and to avoid them; the intellectuals, they say, are much too careless and cause police raids!

Anyone who has the slightest knowledge of the movement is aware that all thinking Social-Democrats have at last begun to regard these amateurish methods as a disease. In order that the reader who is not acquainted with the movement may have no grounds for thinking that we are "inventing" a special stage or special disease of the movement, we shall refer once again to the witness we have quoted. We trust we shall be forgiven for the length of the passage:

"While the gradual transition to more extensive practical activity," writes B—v in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 6, "a transition that is directly dependent on the general transitional period through which the Russian working-class movement is now passing, is a characteristic feature, ... there is, however, another, no less interesting feature in the general mechanism of the Russian workers' revolution. We refer to *the general lack of revolutionary forces fit for action*,* which is felt not only in St. Petersburg, but throughout Russia. With the general revival of the working-class movement, with the general development of the working masses, with the growing frequency of strikes, with the increasingly open mass struggle of the workers,

* All italics ours.

and with the intensified government persecution, arrests, deportation, and exile, this *lack of highly skilled revolutionary forces is becoming more and more marked* and, without a doubt, *cannot but affect the depth and the general character of the movement*. Many strikes take place without any strong and direct influence upon them by the revolutionary organisations.... A shortage of agitational leaflets and illegal literature is felt.... The workers' study circles are left without agitators.... In addition, there is a constant dearth of funds. In a word, *the growth of the working-class movement is outstripping the growth and development of the revolutionary organisations*. The numerical strength of the active revolutionaries is too small to enable them to concentrate in their own hands the influence exercised upon the whole mass of discontented workers, or to give this discontent even a shadow of coherence and organisation.... The separate study circles, the separate revolutionaries, scattered, uncombined, do not represent a single, strong, and disciplined organisation with proportionately developed parts....” Admitting that the immediate organisation of fresh study circles to replace those that have been broken up “merely proves the vitality of the movement ... but does not prove the existence of an adequate number of adequately prepared revolutionary workers”, the author concludes: “The lack of practical training among the St. Petersburg revolutionaries is seen in the results of their work. The recent trials, especially that of the Self-Emancipation Group and the Labour-against-Capital group,[176] clearly showed that the young agitator, lacking a detailed knowledge of working class conditions and, consequently, of the conditions under which agitation can be carried on in a given factory, ignorant of the principles of secrecy, and understanding only the general principles of Social-Democracy [if he does] is able to carry on his work for perhaps four, five, or six months. Then come arrests, which frequently lead to the break-up of the entire organisation, or at all events, of part of it. The question arises, therefore, can the group conduct successful activity if its existence is measured by months?... Obviously, the defects of the existing organisations cannot be wholly ascribed to the transitional period.... Obviously, the numerical, and above all the qualitative, make-up of the functioning organisations is no small factor, and the first task our Social-Democrats must undertake ... is that of *effectively combining the organisations and making a strict selection of their membership*.”

B. PRIMITIVENESS AND ECONOMISM

We must now deal with a question that has undoubtedly come to the mind of every reader. Can a connection be established between primitiveness as growing pains that affect the *whole* movement, and Economism, which is *one* of the currents in Russian Social-Democracy? We think that it can. Lack of practical training, of ability to carry on organisational work is certainly common *to us all*, includ-

ing those who have from the very outset unswervingly stood for revolutionary Marxism. Of course, were it only lack of practical training, no one could blame the practical workers. But the term "primitiveness" embraces something more than lack of training; it denotes a narrow scope of revolutionary work generally, failure to understand that a good organisation of revolutionaries cannot be built on the basis of such narrow activity, and lastly—and this is the main thing—attempts to justify this narrowness and to elevate it to a special "theory", i.e., subservience to spontaneity on this question too. Once such attempts were revealed, it became clear that primitiveness is connected with Economism and that we shall never rid ourselves of this narrowness of our organisational activity until we rid ourselves of Economism generally (i.e., the narrow conception of Marxist theory, as well as of the role of Social-Democracy and of its political tasks). These attempts manifested themselves in a twofold direction. Some began to say that the working masses themselves have not yet advanced the broad and militant political tasks which the revolutionaries are attempting to "impose" on them; that they must continue to struggle for *immediate* political demands, to conduct "the economic struggle against the employers and the government"* (and, naturally, corresponding to this struggle which is "accessible" to the mass movement there must be an organisation that will be "accessible" to the most untrained youth). Others, far removed from any theory of "gradualness", said that it is possible and necessary to "bring about a political revolution", but that this does not require building a strong organisation of revolutionaries to train the proletariat in steadfast and stubborn struggle. All we need do is to snatch up our old friend, the "accessible" cudgel. To drop metaphor, it means that we must organise a general strike,** or that we must stimulate the "spiritless" progress of the working-class movement by means of "excitative terror"***

---

* *Rabochaya Mysl* and *Rabocheye Dyelo*, especially the *Reply* to Plekhanov.

** See "Who Will Bring About the Political Revolution?" in the collection published in Russia, entitled *The Proletarian Struggle*. Re-issued by the Kiev Committee.

*** *Regeneration of Revolutionism* and the journal *Svoboda*.

Both these trends, the opportunists and the "revolutionists", bow to the prevailing amateurism; neither believes that it can be eliminated, neither understands our primary and imperative practical task to establish *an organisation of revolutionaries* capable of lending energy, stability, and continuity to the political struggle.

We have quoted the words of B—v: "The growth of the working-class movement is outstripping the growth and development of the revolutionary organisations." This "valuable remark of a close observer" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*'s comment on B—v's article) has a twofold value for us. It shows that we were right in our opinion that the principal cause of the present crisis in Russian Social-Democracy is *the lag of the leaders* ("ideologists", revolutionaries, Social-Democrats) behind *the spontaneous upsurge of the masses*. It shows that all the arguments advanced by the authors of the Economist letter (in *Iskra*, No. 12), by Krichevsky and by Martynov, as to the danger of belittling the significance of the spontaneous element, of the drab everyday struggle, as to tactics-as-process, etc., are nothing more than a glorification and a defence of primitiveness. These people who cannot pronounce the word "theoretician" without a sneer, who describe their genuflections to common lack of training and backwardness as a "sense for the realities of life", reveal in practice a failure to understand our most imperative *practical* tasks. To laggards they shout: Keep in step! Don't run ahead! To people suffering from a lack of energy and initiative in organisational work, from a lack of "plans" for wide and bold activity, they prate about "tactics-as-process"! The worst sin we commit is that we *degrade* our political *and organisational* tasks to the level of the immediate, "palpable", "concrete" interests of the everyday economic struggle; yet they keep singing to us the same refrain: Lend the economic struggle itself a political character! We repeat: this kind of thing displays as much "sense for the realities of life" as was displayed by the hero in the popular fable who cried out to a passing funeral procession, "Many happy returns of the day!"

Recall the matchless, truly "Nartsis-like" supercilliousness with which these wiseacres lectured Plekhanov on the "workers' *circles* generally" (*sic*!) being "unable to cope

with political tasks in the real and *practical* sense of the word, i.e., in the sense of the expedient and successful *practical* struggle for political demands" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*'s *Reply*, p. 24). There are circles and circles, gentlemen! Circles of "amateurs" are not, of course, capable of coping with political tasks so long as they have not become aware of their amateurism and do not abandon it. If, besides this, these amateurs are enamoured of their primitive methods, and insist on writing the word "practical" in italics, and imagine that being practical demands that one's tasks be reduced to the level of understanding of the most backward strata of the masses, then they are hopeless amateurs and, of course, certainly cannot *in general cope with any political tasks*. But a circle of leaders, of the type of Alexeyev and Myshkin, of Khalturin and Zhelyabov, is capable of coping with political tasks in the genuine and most practical sense of the term, for the reason and to the extent that their impassioned propaganda meets with response among the spontaneously awakening masses, and their sparkling energy is answered and supported by the energy of the revolutionary class. Plekhanov was profoundly right, not only in pointing to this revolutionary class and proving that its spontaneous awakening was inevitable, but in setting even the "workers' circles" a great and lofty political task. But you refer to the mass movement that has sprung up since that time in order *to degrade* this task, *to curtail* the energy and scope of activity of the "workers' circles". If you are not amateurs enamoured of your primitive methods, what are you then? You boast that you are practical, but you fail to see what every Russian practical worker knows, namely, the miracles that the energy, not only of a circle, but even of an individual person is able to perform in the revolutionary cause. Or do you think that our movement cannot produce leaders like those of the seventies? If so, why do you think so? Because we lack training? But we are training ourselves, we will go on training ourselves, and we will be trained! Unfortunately it is true that the surface of the stagnant waters of the "economic struggle against the employers and the government" is overgrown with fungus; people have appeared among us who kneel in prayer to spontaneity, gazing with awe (to take an expression from

Plekhanov) upon the "posterior" of the Russian proletariat. But we will get rid of this fungus. The time has come when Russian revolutionaries, guided by a genuinely revolutionary theory, relying upon the genuinely revolutionary and spontaneously awakening class, can at last—at long last!—rise to full stature in all their giant strength. All that is required is for the masses of our practical workers, and the still larger masses of those who dreamed of practical work when they were still at school, to pour scorn and ridicule upon any suggestion that may be made to degrade our political tasks and to restrict the scope of our organisational work. And we will achieve that, rest assured, gentlemen!

In the article "Where To Begin", I wrote in opposition to *Rabocheye Dyelo*: "The tactics of agitation in relation to some special question, or the tactics with regard to some detail of party organisation may be changed in twenty-four hours; but only people devoid of all principle are capable of changing, in twenty-four hours, or, for that matter, in twenty-four months, their view on the necessity—in general, constantly, and absolutely—of an organisation of struggle and of political agitation among the masses."* To this *Rabocheye Dyelo* replied: "This, the only one of *Iskra*'s charges that makes a pretence of being based on facts, is totally without foundation. Readers of *Rabocheye Dyelo* know very well that from the outset we not only called for political agitation, without waiting for the appearance of *Iskra* ... [saying at the same time that not only the workers' study circles, "but also the mass working-class movement could not regard as its first political task the overthrow of absolutism", but only the struggle for immediate political demands, and that "the masses begin to understand immediate political demands after one, or at all events, after several strikes"],... but that with our publications which we furnished from abroad for the comrades working in Russia, we provided the *only* Social-Democratic political and agitational material ... [and in this sole material you not only based the widest political agitation exclusively on the economic struggle, but you even went to the extent of claiming that this restricted agitation was the "most widely

* See present volume, p. 18.—*Ed.*

applicable". And do you not observe, gentlemen, that your own argument—that this was the *only* material provided—proves the necessity for *Iskra*'s appearance, and its struggle against *Rabocheye Dyelo*?]. ... On the other hand, our publishing activity actually prepared the ground for the tactical unity of the Party ... [unity in the conviction that tactics is a process of growth of Party tasks that grow together with the Party? A precious unity indeed!] ... and by that rendered possible the creation of a 'militant organisation' for which the Union Abroad did all that an organisation abroad could do" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 15). A vain attempt at evasion! I would never dream of denying that you did all you possibly could. I have asserted and assert now that the *limits* of what is "possible" for you to do are restricted by the narrowness of your outlook. It is ridiculous to talk of a "militant organisation" to fight for "immediate political demands", or to conduct the economic struggle against the employers and the government".

But if the reader wishes to see the pearls of "Economist" infatuation with amateurism, he must, of course, turn from the eclectic and vacillating *Rabocheye Dyelo* to the consistent and determined *Rabochaya Mysl*. In its *Separate Supplement*, p. 13, R. M. wrote: "Now two words about the so-called revolutionary intelligentsia proper. True, on more than one occasion it has proved itself prepared 'to enter into determined battle with tsarism'. The unfortunate thing, however, is that our revolutionary intelligentsia, ruthlessly persecuted by the political police, imagined the struggle against the political police to be the political struggle against the autocracy. That is why, to this day, it cannot understand 'where the forces for the struggle against the autocracy are to be obtained'."

Truly matchless is the lofty contempt for the struggle against the police displayed by this worshipper (in the worst sense of the word) of the *spontaneous* movement! He is prepared *to justify* our inability to organise secret activity by the argument that with the spontaneous mass movement it is not at all important for us to struggle against the political police! Very few people indeed would subscribe to this appalling conclusion; to such an extent have our deficiencies in revolutionary organisations become a matter of acute

importance. But if Martynov, for example, refuses to subscribe to this, it will only be because he is unable, or lacks the courage, to think out his ideas to their logical conclusion. Indeed, does the "task" of advancing concrete demands by the masses, demands that promise palpable results, call for special efforts to create a stable, centralised, militant organisation of revolutionaries? Cannot such a "task" be carried out even by masses that do not "struggle against the political police" at all? Could this task, moreover, be fulfilled if, in addition to the few leaders, it were not undertaken by such workers (the overwhelming majority) as are quite *incapable* of "struggling against the political police"? Such workers, average people of the masses, are capable of displaying enormous energy and self-sacrifice in strikes and in street battles with the police and the troops, and are capable (in fact, are alone capable) of *determining* the outcome of our entire movement—but the struggle against the *political* police requires special qualities; it requires *professional* revolutionaries. And we must see to it, not only that the masses "advance" concrete demands, but that the masses of the workers "advance" an increasing number of such professional revolutionaries. Thus, we have reached the question of the relation between an organisation of professional revolutionaries and the labour movement pure and simple. Although this question has found little reflection in literature, it has greatly engaged us "politicians" in conversations and polemics with comrades who gravitate more or less towards Economism. It is a question meriting special treatment. But before taking it up, let us offer one further quotation by way of illustrating our thesis on the connection between primitiveness and Economism.

In his *Reply*, Mr. N. N.[177] wrote: "The Emancipation of Labour group demands direct struggle against the government without first considering where the material forces for this struggle are to be obtained, and without indicating *the path of the struggle*." Emphasising the last words, the author adds the following footnote to the word "path": "This cannot be explained by purposes of secrecy, because the programme does not refer to a plot but to *a mass movement*. And the masses cannot proceed by secret paths. Can we conceive of a secret strike? Can we conceive of secret

demonstrations and petitions?" (*Vademecum*, p. 59.) Thus, the author comes quite close to the question of the "material forces" (organisers of strikes and demonstrations) and to the "paths" of the struggle, but, nevertheless, is still in a state of consternation, because he "worships" the mass movement, i.e., he regards it as something that *relieves* us of the necessity of conducting revolutionary activity and not as something that should encourage us and stimulate our revolutionary activity. It is impossible for a strike to remain a secret to those participating in it and to those immediately associated with it, but it may (and in the majority of cases does) remain a "secret" to the masses of the Russian workers, because the government takes care to cut all communication with the strikers, to prevent all news of strikes from spreading. Here indeed is where a special "struggle against the political police" is required, a struggle that can never be conducted actively by such large masses as take part in strikes. This struggle must be organised, according to "all the rules of the art", by people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity. The fact that the masses are spontaneously being drawn into the movement does not make the organisation of this struggle *less necessary*. On the contrary, it makes it *more necessary*; for we socialists would be failing in our direct duty to the masses if we did not prevent the police from making a secret of every strike and every demonstration (and if we did not ourselves from time to time secretly prepare strikes and demonstrations). And we *will succeed in doing this*, because the spontaneously awakening masses will *also produce* increasing, numbers of "professional revolutionaries" *from their own ranks* (that is, if we do not take it into our heads to advise the workers to keep on marking time).

C. ORGANISATION OF WORKERS AND ORGANISATION OF REVOLUTIONARIES

It is only natural to expect that for a Social-Democrat whose conception of the political struggle coincides with the conception of the "economic struggle against the employers and the government", the "organisation of revolutionaries" will more or less coincide with the "organisation of

workers". This, in fact, is what actually happens; so that when we speak of organisation, we literally speak in different tongues. I vividly recall, for example, a conversation I once had with a fairly consistent Economist, with whom I had not been previously acquainted. We were discussing the pamphlet, *Who Will Bring About the Political Revolution?* and were soon of a mind that its principal defect was its ignoring of the question of organisation. We had begun to assume full agreement between us; but, as the conversation proceeded, it became evident that we were talking of different things. My interlocutor accused the author of ignoring strike funds, mutual benefit societies, etc., whereas I had in mind an organisation of revolutionaries as an essential factor in "bringing about" the political revolution. As soon as the disagreement became clear, there was hardly, as I remember, a single question of principle upon which I was in agreement with the Economist!

What was the source of our disagreement? It was the fact that on questions both of organisation and of politics the Economists are forever lapsing from Social-Democracy into trade-unionism. The political struggle of Social-Democracy is far more extensive and complex than the economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government. Similarly (indeed for that reason), the organisation of the revolutionary Social-Democratic Party must inevitably be of *a kind different* from the organisation of the workers designed for this struggle. The workers' organisation must in the first place be a trade-union organisation; secondly, it must be as broad as possible; and thirdly, it must be as public as conditions will allow (here, and further on, of course, I refer only to absolutist Russia). On the other hand, the organisation of the revolutionaries must consist first and foremost of people who make revolutionary activity their profession (for which reason I speak of the organisation of *revolutionaries*, meaning revolutionary Social-Democrats). In view of this common characteristic of the members of such an organisation, *all distinctions as between workers and intellectuals*, not to speak of distinctions of trade and profession, in both categories, *must be effaced*. Such an organisation must perforce not be very extensive

and must be as secret as possible. Let us examine this threefold distinction.

In countries where political liberty exists the distinction between a trade-union and a political organisation is clear enough, as is the distinction between trade unions and Social-Democracy. The relations between the latter and the former will naturally vary in each country according to historical, legal, and other conditions; they may be more or less close, complex, etc. (in our opinion they should be as close and as little complicated as possible); but there can be no question in free countries of the organisation of trade unions coinciding with the organisation of the Social-Democratic Party. In Russia, however, the yoke of the autocracy appears at first glance to obliterate all distinctions between the Social-Democratic organisation and the workers' associations, since *all* workers' associations and *all* study circles are prohibited, and since the principal manifestation and weapon of the workers' economic struggle—the strike—is regarded as a criminal (and sometimes even as a political!) offence. Conditions in our country, therefore, on the one hand, strongly "impel" the workers engaged in economic struggle to concern themselves with political questions, and, on the other, they "impel" Social-Democrats to confound trade-unionism with Social-Democracy (and our Krichevskys, Martynovs, and Co., while diligently discussing the first kind of "impulsion", fail to notice the second). Indeed, picture to yourselves people who are immersed ninety-nine per cent in "the economic struggle against the employers and the government". Some of them will never, during the *entire* course of their activity (from four to six months), be impelled to think of the need for a more complex organisation of revolutionaries. Others, perhaps, will come across the fairly widely distributed Bernsteinian literature, from which they will become convinced of the profound importance of the forward movement of "the drab everyday struggle". Still others will be carried away, perhaps, by the seductive idea of showing the world a new example of "close and organic contact with the proletarian struggle"—contact between the trade-union and the Social-Democratic movements. Such people may argue that the later a country enters the arena of capitalism and, consequently, of the

working-class movement, the more the socialists in that country may take part in, and support, the trade-union movement, and the less the reason for the existence of non-Social-Democratic trade unions. So far the argument is fully correct; unfortunately, however, some go beyond that and dream of a complete fusion of Social-Democracy with trade-unionism. We shall soon see, from the example of the Rules of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle, what a harmful effect such dreams have upon our plans of organisation.

The workers' organisations for the economic struggle should be trade-union organisations. Every Social-Democratic worker should as far as possible assist and actively work in these organisations. But, while this is true, it is certainly not in our interest to demand that only Social-Democrats should be eligible for membership in the "trade" unions, since that would only narrow the scope of our influence upon the masses. Let every worker who understands the need to unite for the struggle against the employers and the government join the trade unions. The very aim of the trade unions would be impossible of achievement, if they did not unite all who have attained at least this elementary degree of understanding, if they were not very *broad* organisations. The broader these organisations, the broader will be our influence over them—an influence due, not only to the "spontaneous" development of the economic struggle, but to the direct and conscious effort of the socialist trade-union members to influence their comrades. But a broad organisation cannot apply methods of strict secrecy (since this demands far greater training than is required for the economic struggle). How is the contradiction between the need for a large membership and the need for strictly secret methods to be reconciled? How are we to make the trade unions as public as possible? Generally speaking, there can be only two ways to this end: either the trade unions become legalised (in some countries this preceded the legalisation of the socialist and political unions), or the organisation is kept secret, but so "free" and amorphous, *lose** as the Germans say, that the need for secret methods becomes almost negligible as far as the bulk of the members is concerned.

---

* *Lose* (German)—"loose".—*Ed.*

The legalisation of non-socialist and non-political labour unions in Russia has begun, and there is no doubt that every advance made by our rapidly growing Social-Democratic working-class movement will multiply and encourage attempts at legalisation—attempts proceeding for the most part from supporters of the existing order, but partly also from the workers themselves and from liberal intellectuals. The banner of legality has already been hoisted by the Vasilyevs and the Zubatovs. Support has been promised and rendered by the Ozerovs and the Wormses,[178] and followers of the new tendency are now to be found among the workers. Henceforth, we cannot but reckon with this tendency. How we are to reckon with it, on this there can be no two opinions among Social-Democrats. We must steadfastly expose any part played in this movement by the Zubatovs and the Vasilyeys, the gendarmes and the priests, and explain their real intentions to the workers. We must also expose all the conciliatory, "harmonious" notes that will be heard in the speeches of liberal politicians at legal meetings of the workers, irrespective of whether the speeches are motivated by an earnest conviction of the desirability of peaceful class collaboration, by a desire to curry favour with the powers that be, or whether they are simply the result of clumsiness. Lastly, we must warn the workers against the traps often set by the police, who at such open meetings and permitted societies spy out the "fiery ones" and try to make use of legal organisations to plant their *agents provocateurs* in the illegal organisations.

Doing all this does not at all mean forgetting that *in the long run* the legalisation of the working-class movement will be to our advantage, and not to that of the Zubatovs. On the contrary, it is precisely our campaign of exposure that will help us to separate the tares from the wheat. What the tares are, we have already indicated. By the wheat we mean attracting the attention of ever larger numbers, including the most backward sections, of the workers to social and political questions, and freeing ourselves, the revolutionaries, from functions that are essentially legal (the distribution of legal books, mutual aid, etc.), the development of which will inevitably provide us with an increasing quantity of material for agitation. In this sense, we may, and should,

say to the Zubatovs and the Ozerovs: Keep at it, gentlemen, do your best! Whenever you place a trap in the path of the workers (either by way of direct provocation, or by the "honest" demoralisation of the workers with the aid of "Struve-ism") we will see to it that you are exposed. But whenever you take a real step forward, though it be the most "timid zigzag", we will say: Please continue! And the only step that can be a real step forward is a real, if small, extension of the workers' field of action. Every such extension will be to our advantage and will help to hasten the advent of legal societies of the kind in which it will not be *agents provocateurs* who are detecting socialists, but socialists who are gaining adherents. In a word, our task is to fight the tares. It is not our business to grow wheat in flower-pots. By pulling up the tares, we clear the soil for the wheat. And while the Afanasy Ivanoviches and Pulkheria Ivanovnas[179] are tending their flower-pot crops, we must prepare the reapers, not only to cut down the tares of today, but to reap the wheat of tomorrow.*

Thus, *we* cannot by means of legalisation *solve* the problem of creating a trade-union organisation that will be as little secret and as extensive as possible (but we should be extremely glad if the Zubatovs and the Ozerovs disclosed to us even a partial opportunity for such a solution—to this end, however, we must strenuously combat them). There remain secret trade-union organisations, and *we must* give all possible assistance to the workers who (as we definitely know) are adopting this course. Trade-union organisations, not only can be of tremendous value in developing and consolidating the economic struggle, but can also become

---

* *Iskra*'s campaign against the tares evoked the following angry outburst from *Rabocheye Dyelo*: "For *Iskra*, the signs of the times lie not so much in great events [of the spring], as in the miserable attempts of the agents of Zubatov to 'legalise' the working-class movement. It fails to see that these facts tell against it; for they testify that the working-class movement has assumed menacing proportions in the eyes of the government" (*Two Conferences*, p. 27). For all this we have to blame the "dogmatism" of the orthodox who "turn a deaf ear to the imperative demands of life". They obstinately refuse to see the yard-high wheat and are combating inch-high tares! Does this not reveal a "distorted sense of perspective in regard to the Russian working-class movement" (ibid., p. 27)?

a very important auxiliary to political agitation and revolutionary organisation. In order to achieve this purpose, and in order to guide the nascent trade-union movement in the channels desired by Social-Democracy, we must first understand clearly the absurdity of the plan of organisation the St. Petersburg Economists have been nursing for nearly five years. That plan is set forth in the "Rules for a Workers' Mutual Benefit Fund" of July 1897 ("*Listok*" *Rabotnika*, No. 9-10, p. 46, taken from *Rabochaya Mysl*, No. 1), as well as in the "Rules for a Trade-Union Workers' Organisation" of October 1900 (special leaflet printed in St. Petersburg and referred to in *Iskra*, No. 1). Both these sets of rules have one main shortcoming: they set up the broad workers' organisation in a rigidly specified structure and confound it with the organisation of revolutionaries. Let us take the last-mentioned set of rules, since it is drawn up in greater detail. The body consists of *fifty-two* paragraphs. Twenty-three deal with the structure, the method of functioning, and the competence of the "workers' circles", which are to be organised in every factory ("a maximum of ten persons") and which elect "central (factory) groups". "The central group," says paragraph 2, "observes all that goes on in its factory or workshop and keeps a record of events." "The central group presents to subscribers a monthly financial account" (par. 17), etc. Ten paragraphs are devoted to the "district organisation", and nineteen to the highly complex interconnection between the Committee of the Workers' Organisation and the Committee of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle (elected representatives of each district and of the "executive groups"—"groups of propagandists, groups for maintaining contact with the provinces, and with the organisation abroad, groups for managing stores, publications, and funds").

Social-Democracy = "executive groups" in relation to the economic struggle of the workers! It would be difficult to show more glaringly how the Economists' ideas deviate from Social-Democracy to trade-unionism, and how alien to them is any idea that a Social-Democrat must concern himself first and foremost with an organisation of revolutionaries capable of guiding the *entire* proletarian struggle for emancipation. To talk of "the political emancipation of the

working class" and of the struggle against "tsarist despotism", and at the same time to draft rules like these, means to have no idea whatsoever of the real political tasks of Social-Democracy. Not one of the fifty or so paragraphs reveals even a glimmer of understanding that it is necessary to conduct the widest possible political agitation among the masses, an agitation highlighting every aspect of Russian absolutism and the specific features of the various social classes in Russia. Rules like these are of no use even for the achievement of trade-union, let alone political, aims, since trade unions are organised by *trades*, of which no mention is made.

But most characteristic, perhaps, is the amazing top-heaviness of the whole "system", which attempts to bind each single factory and its "committee" by a permanent string of uniform and ludicrously petty rules and a three-stage system of election. Hemmed in by the narrow outlook of Economism, the mind is lost in details that positively reek of red tape and bureaucracy. In practice, of course, three-fourths of the clauses are never applied; on the other hand, a "secret" organisation of this kind, with its central group in each factory, makes it very easy for the gendarmes to carry out raids on a vast scale. The Polish comrades have passed through a similar phase in their movement, with everybody enthusiastic about the extensive organisation of workers' benefit funds; but they very quickly abandoned this idea when they saw that such organisations only provided rich harvests for the gendarmes. If we have in mind broad workers' organisations, and not widespread arrests, if we do not want to provide satisfaction to the gendarmes, we must see to it that these organisations remain without any rigid formal structure. But will they be able to function in that case?

Let us see what the functions are: "... To observe all that goes on in the factory and keep a record of events" (par. 2 of the Rules). Do we really require a formally established group for this purpose? Could not the purpose be better served by correspondence conducted in the illegal papers without the setting up of special groups? "... To lead the struggles of the workers for the improvement of their workshop conditions" (par. 3). This, too, requires no set organisational

form. Any sensible agitator can in the course of ordinary conversation gather what the demands of the workers are and transmit them to a narrow—not a broad—organisation of revolutionaries for expression in a leaflet. "...To organise a fund ... to which subscriptions of two kopeks per ruble* should be made" (par. 9)—and then to present to subscribers a monthly financial account (par. 17), to expel members who fail to pay their contributions (par. 10), and so forth. Why, this is a very paradise for the police; for nothing would be easier for them than to penetrate into such a secrecy of a "central factory fund", confiscate the money, and arrest the best people. Would it not be simpler to issue one-kopek or two-kopek coupons bearing the official stamp of a well-known (very narrow and very secret) organisation, or to make collections without coupons of any kind and to print reports in a certain agreed code in an illegal paper? The object would thereby be attained, but it would be a hundred times more difficult for the gendarmes to pick up clues.

I could go on analysing the Rules, but I think that what has been said will suffice. A small, compact core of the most reliable, experienced, and hardened workers, with responsible representatives in the principal districts and connected by all the rules of strict secrecy with the organisation of revolutionaries, can, with the widest support of the masses and without any formal organisation, perform *all* the functions of a trade-union organisation, in a manner, moreover, desirable to Social-Democracy. Only in this way can we secure the *consolidation* and development of a *Social-Democratic* trade-union movement, despite all the gendarmes.

It may be objected that an organisation which is so *lose* that it is not even definitely formed, and which has not even an enrolled and registered membership, cannot be called an organisation at all. Perhaps so. Not the name is important. What is important is that this "organisation without members" shall do everything that is required, and from the very outset ensure a solid connection between our future trade unions and socialism. Only an incorrigible utopian would have a *broad* organisation of workers, with elections, reports, universal suffrage, etc., under the autocracy.

* Of wages earned.—*Tr.*

The moral to be drawn from this is simple. If we begin with the solid foundation of a strong organisation of revolutionaries, we can ensure the stability of the movement as a whole and carry out the aims both of Social-Democracy and of trade unions proper. If, however, we begin with a broad workers' organisation, which is supposedly most "accessible" to the masses (but which is actually most accessible to the gendarmes and makes revolutionaries most accessible to the police), we shall achieve neither the one aim nor the other; we shall not eliminate our rule-of-thumb methods, and, because we remain scattered and our forces are constantly broken up by the police, we shall only make trade unions of the Zubatov and Ozerov type the more accessible to the masses.

What, properly speaking, should be the functions of the organisation of revolutionaries? We shall deal with this question in detail. First, however, let us examine a very typical argument advanced by our terrorist, who (sad fate!) in this matter also is a next-door neighbour to the Economist. *Svoboda*, a journal published for workers, contains in its first issue an article entitled "Organisation", the author of which tries to defend his friends, the Economist workers of Ivanovo-Voznesensk. He writes:

> "It is bad when the masses are mute and unenlightened, when the movement does not come from the rank and file. For instance, the students of a university town leave for their homes during the summer and other holidays, and immediately the workers' movement comes to a standstill. Can a workers' movement which has to be pushed on from outside be a real force? No, indeed.... It has not yet learned to walk, it is still in leading-strings. So it is in all matters. The students go off, and everything comes to a standstill. The most capable are seized; the cream is skimmed and the milk turns sour. If the 'committee' is arrested, everything comes to a standstill until a new one can be formed. And one never knows what sort of committee will be set up next—it may be nothing like the former. The first said one thing, the second may say the very opposite. Continuity between yesterday and tomorrow is broken, the experience of the past does not serve as a guide for the future. And all because no roots have been struck in depth, in the masses; the work is carried on not by a hundred fools, but by a dozen wise men. A dozen wise men can be wiped out at a snap, but when the organisation embraces masses, everything proceeds from them, and nobody, however he tries, can wreck the cause" (p. 63).

The facts are described correctly. The picture of our amateurism is well drawn. But the conclusions are worthy

of *Rabochaya Mysl*, both as regards their stupidity and their lack of political tact. They represent the height of stupidity, because the author confuses the philosophical and social-historical question of the "depth" of the "roots" of the movement with the technical and organisational question of the best method in combating the gendarmes. They represent the height of political tactlessness, because, instead of appealing from bad leaders to good leaders, the author appeals from the leaders in general to the "masses" . This is as much an attempt to drag us back organisationally as the idea of substituting excitative terrorism for political agitation drags us back politically. Indeed, I am experiencing a veritable *embarras de richesses*, and hardly know where to begin to disentangle the jumble offered up by *Svoboda*. For clarity, let me begin by citing an example. Take the Germans. It will not be denied, I hope, that theirs is a mass organisation, that in Germany everything proceeds from the masses, that the working-class movement there has learned to walk. Yet observe how these millions value their "dozen" tried political leaders, how firmly they cling to them. Members of the hostile parties in parliament have often taunted the socialists by exclaiming: "Fine democrats you are indeed! Yours is a working-class movement only in name; in actual fact the same clique of leaders is always in evidence, the same Bebel and the same Liebknecht, year in and year out, and that goes on for decades. Your supposedly elected workers' deputies are more permanent than the officials appointed by the Emperor!" But the Germans only smile with contempt at these demagogic attempts to set the "masses" against the "leaders", to arouse bad and ambitious instincts in the former, and to rob the movement of its solidity and stability by undermining the confidence of the masses in their "dozen wise men". Political thinking is sufficiently developed among the Germans, and they have accumulated sufficient political experience to understand that without the "dozen" tried and talented leaders (and talented men are not born by the hundreds), professionally trained, schooled by long experience, and working in perfect harmony, no class in modern society can wage a determined struggle. The Germans too have had demagogues in their ranks who have flattered the "hundred fools", exalted them above the "dozen

wise men", extolled the "horny hand" of the masses, and (like Most and Hasselmann) have spurred them on to reckless "revolutionary" action and sown distrust towards the firm and steadfast leaders. It was only by stubbornly and relentlessly combating all demagogic elements within the socialist movement that German socialism has managed to grow and become as strong as it is. Our wiseacres, however, at a time when Russian Social-Democracy is passing through a crisis entirely due to the lack of sufficiently trained, developed, and experienced leaders to guide the spontaneously awakening masses, cry out with the profundity of fools: "It is a bad business when the movement does not proceed from the rank and file."

"A committee of students is of no use; it is not stable." Quite true. But the conclusion to be drawn from this is that we must have a committee of professional *revolutionaries*, and it is immaterial whether a student or a worker is capable of becoming a professional revolutionary. The conclusion you draw, however, is that the working-class movement must not be pushed on from outside! In your political innocence you fail to notice that you are playing into the hands of our Economists and fostering our amateurism. Wherein, may I ask, did our students "push on" our workers? *In the sense* that the student brought to the worker the fragments of political knowledge he himself possesses, the crumbs of socialist ideas he has managed to acquire (for the principal intellectual diet of the present-day student, legal Marxism, could furnish only the rudiments, only scraps of knowledge). There has never been too much of *such* "pushing on from outside"; on the contrary, there has so far been all too little of it in our movement, for we have been stewing too assiduously in our own juice; we have bowed far too slavishly to the elementary "economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government". We professional revolutionaries must and will make it our business to engage in *this kind* of "pushing on" a hundred times more forcibly than we have done hitherto. But the very fact that you select so hideous a phrase as "pushing on from outside"—a phrase which cannot but rouse in the workers (at least in the workers who are as unenlightened as you yourselves) a sense of distrust towards *all* who bring

them political knowledge and revolutionary experience from outside, which cannot but rouse in them an instinctive desire to resist *all* such people—proves you to be *demagogues*, and demagogues are the worst enemies of the working class.

And, please—don't hasten howling about my "uncomradely methods" of debating. I have not the least desire to doubt the purity of your intentions. As I have said, one may become a demagogue out of sheer political innocence. But I have shown that you have descended to demagogy, and I will never tire of repeating that demagogues are the worst enemies of the working class. The worst enemies, because they arouse base instincts in the masses, because the unenlightened worker is unable to recognise his enemies in men who represent themselves, and sometimes sincerely so, as his friends. The worst enemies, because in the period of disunity and vacillation, when our movement is just beginning to take shape, nothing is easier than to employ demagogic methods to mislead the masses, who can realise their error only later by bitter experience. That is why the slogan of the day for the Russian Social-Democrat must be—resolute struggle against *Svoboda* and *Rabocheye Dyelo*, both of which have sunk to the level of demagogy. We shall deal with this further in greater detail.*

"A dozen wise men can be more easily wiped out than a hundred fools." This wonderful truth (for which the hundred fools will always applaud you) appears obvious only because in the very midst of the argument you have skipped from one question to another. You began by talking and continued to talk of the unearthing of a "committee", of the unearthing of an "organisation", and now you skip to the question of unearthing the movement's "roots" in their "depths". The fact is, of course, that our movement cannot be unearthed, for the very reason that it has countless thousands of roots deep down among the masses; but that is not the point at issue. As far as "deep roots" are concerned,

* For the moment let us observe merely that our remarks on "pushing on from outside" and *Svoboda*'s other disquisitions on organisation apply *in their entirety* to *all* the Economists, including the adherents of *Rabocheye Dyelo*; for some of them have actively preached and defended such views on organisation, while others among them have drifted into them.

we cannot be "unearthed" even now, despite all our amateurism, and yet we all complain, and cannot but complain, that the "*organisations*" are being unearthed and as a result it is impossible to maintain continuity in the movement. But since you raise the question of *organisations* being unearthed and persist in your opinion, I assert that it is far more difficult to unearth a dozen wise men than a hundred fools. This position I will defend, no matter how much you instigate the masses against me for my "anti-democratic" views, etc. As I have stated repeatedly, by "wise men", in connection with organisation, I mean *professional revolutionaries*, irrespective of whether they have developed from among students or working men. I assert: (1) that no revolutionary movement can endure without a stable organisation of leaders maintaining continuity; (2) that the broader the popular mass drawn spontaneously into the struggle, which forms the basis of the movement and participates in it, the more urgent the need for such an organisation, and the more solid this organisation must be (for it is much easier for all sorts of demagogues to side-track the more backward sections of the masses); (3) that such an organisation must consist chiefly of people professionally engaged in revolutionary activity; (4) that in an autocratic state, the more we *confine* the membership of such an organisation to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult will it be to unearth the organisation; and (5) the *greater* will be the number of people from the working class and from the other social classes who will be able to join the movement and perform active work in it.

I invite our Economists, terrorists, and "Economists-terrorists"* to confute these propositions. At the moment,

* This term is perhaps more applicable to *Svoboda* than the former, for in an article entitled "The Regeneration of Revolutionism" the publication defends terrorism, while in the article at present under review it defends Economism. One might say of *Svoboda* that "it would if it could, but it can't". Its wishes and intentions are of the very best—but the result is utter confusion; this is chiefly due to the fact that, while *Svoboda* advocates continuity of organisation, it refuses to recognise continuity of revolutionary thought and Social-Democratic theory. It wants to revive the professional revolutionary ("The

I shall deal only with the last two points. The question as to whether it is easier to wipe out "a dozen wise men" or "a hundred fools" reduces itself to the question, above considered, whether it is possible to have a mass *organisation* when the maintenance of strict secrecy is essential. We can never give a mass organisation that degree of secrecy without which there can be no question of persistent and continuous struggle against the government. To concentrate all secret functions in the hands of as small a number of professional revolutionaries as possible does not mean that the latter will "do the thinking for all" and that the rank and file will not take an active part in the *movement*. On the contrary, the membership will promote increasing numbers of the professional revolutionaries from its ranks; for it will know that it is not enough for a few students and for a few working men waging the economic struggle to gather in order to form a "committee", but that it takes years to train oneself to be a professional revolutionary; and the rank and file will "think", not only of amateurish methods, but of such training. Centralisation of the secret functions of the *organisation* by no means implies centralisation of all the functions of the *movement*. Active participation of the widest masses in the illegal press will not diminish because a "dozen" professional revolutionaries centralise the secret functions connected with this work; on the contrary, it will *increase* tenfold. In this way, and in this way alone, shall we ensure that reading the illegal press, writing for it, and to some extent even distributing it, will *almost cease to be secret work*, for the police will soon come to realise the folly and impossibility of judicial and administrative red-tape procedure over every copy of a publication that is being distributed in the thousands. This holds not only for the press, but for every function of the movement, even for demonstrations. The active and widespread participation of the masses will not suffer; on the contrary, it will benefit by the fact that a "dozen" experienced revolution-

---

Regeneration of Revolutionism"), and to that end proposes, first, excitative terrorism, and, secondly, "an organisation of average workers" (*Svoboda*, No. 1, p. 66, et seq.), as less likely to be "pushed on from outside". In other words, it proposes to pull the house down to use the timber for heating it.

aries, trained professionally no less than the police, will centralise all the secret aspects of the work—the drawing up of leaflets, the working out of approximate plans; and the appointing of bodies of leaders for each urban district, for each factory district, and for each educational institution, etc. (I know that exception will be taken to my "undemocratic" views, but I shall reply below fully to this anything but intelligent objection.) Centralisation of the most secret functions in an organisation of revolutionaries will not diminish, but rather increase the extent and enhance the quality of the activity of a large number of other organisations, that are intended for a broad public and are therefore as loose and as non-secret as possible, such as workers' trade unions; workers' self-education circles and circles for reading illegal literature; and socialist, as well as democratic, circles among *all* other sections of the population; etc., etc. We must have such circles, trade unions, and organisations everywhere in *as large a number as possible* and with the widest variety of functions; but it would be absurd and harmful *to confound* them with the organisation of *revolutionaries*, to efface the border-line between them, to make still more hazy the all too faint recognition of the fact that in order to "serve" the mass movement we must have people who will devote themselves exclusively to Social-Democratic activities, and that such people must *train* themselves patiently and steadfastly to be professional revolutionaries.

Yes, this recognition is incredibly dim. Our worst sin with regard to organisation consists in the fact that *by our primitiveness we have lowered the prestige of revolutionaries in Russia*. A person who is flabby and shaky on questions of theory, who has a narrow outlook, who pleads the spontaneity of the masses as an excuse for his own sluggishness, who resembles a trade-union secretary more than a spokesman of the people, who is unable to conceive of a broad and bold plan that would command the respect even of opponents, and who is inexperienced and clumsy in his own professional art—the art of combating the political police—such a man is not a revolutionary, but a wretched amateur!

Let no active worker take offence at these frank remarks, for as far as insufficient training is concerned, I apply them first and foremost to myself. I used to work in a study circle[180]

that set itself very broad, all-embracing tasks; and all of us, members of that circle, suffered painfully and acutely from the realisation that we were acting as amateurs at a moment in history when we might have been able to say, varying a well-known statement: "Give us an organisation of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia" The more I recall the burning sense of shame I then experienced, the bitterer become my feelings towards those pseudo-Social-Democrats whose preachings "bring disgrace on the calling of a revolutionary", who fail to understand that our task is not to champion the degrading of the revolutionary to the level of an amateur, but *to raise* the amateurs to the level of revolutionaries.

D. THE SCOPE OF ORGANISATIONAL WORK

We have heard B—v tell us about "the lack of revolutionary forces fit for action which is felt not only in St. Petersburg, but throughout Russia". Hardly anyone will dispute this fact. But the question is, how is it to be explained? B—v writes:

> "We shall not go into an explanation of the historical causes of this phenomenon; we shall merely state that a society, demoralised by prolonged political reaction and split by past and present economic changes, promotes from its own ranks *an extremely small number of persons fit for revolutionary work*; that the working class does produce revolutionary workers who to some extent reinforce the ranks of the illegal organisations, but that the number of such revolutionaries is inadequate to meet the requirements of the times. This is all the more so because the worker who spends eleven and a half hours a day in the factory is in such a position that he can, in the main, perform only the functions of an agitator; but propaganda and organisation, the delivery and reproduction of illegal literature, the issuance of leaflets, etc., are duties which must necessarily fall mainly upon the shoulders of an extremely small force of intellectuals" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 6, pp. 38-39).

On many points we disagree with B—v, particularly with those we have emphasised, which most saliently reveal that, although weary of our amateurism (as is every thinking practical worker), B—v cannot find the way out of this intolerable situation because he is weighted down by Economism. The fact is that society produces very *many* persons fit for

"the cause", but we are unable to make use of them all. The critical, transitional state of our movement in this respect may be formulated as follows: *There are no people—yet there is a mass of people*. There is a mass of people, because the working class and increasingly varied social strata, year after year, produce from their ranks an increasing number of discontented people who desire to protest, who are ready to render all the assistance they can in the struggle against absolutism, the intolerableness of which, though not yet recognised by all, is more and more acutely sensed by increasing masses of the people. At the same time, we have no people, because we have no leaders, no political leaders, no talented organisers capable of arranging extensive and at the same time uniform and harmonious work that would employ all forces, even the most inconsiderable. "The growth and development of the revolutionary organisations" lag, not only behind the growth of the working-class movement, which even B—v admits, but behind that of the general democratic movement among all strata of the people. (In passing, probably B—v would now regard this as supplementing his conclusion.) The scope of revolutionary work is too narrow, as compared with the breadth of the spontaneous basis of the movement. It is too hemmed in by the wretched theory of "economic struggle against the employers and the government". Yet, at the present time, not only Social-Democratic political agitators, but Social-Democratic organisers must "go among all classes of the population".* There is hardly a single practical worker who will doubt that the Social-Democrats could distribute the thousand and one minute functions of their organisational work among individual representatives of the most varied classes. Lack of specialisation is one of the most serious defects of our technique, about which B—v justly and bitterly complains. The smaller each separate "operation" in our common cause the more people

* Thus, an undoubted revival of the democratic spirit has recently been observed among persons in military service, partly as a consequence of the more frequent street battles with "enemies" like workers and students. As soon as our available forces permit, we must without fail devote the most serious attention to propaganda and agitation among soldiers and officers, and to the creation of "military organisations" affiliated to our Party.

we can find capable of carrying out such operations (people who, in the majority of cases, are completely incapable of becoming professional revolutionaries); more difficult will it be for the police to "net" all these "detail workers", and the more difficult will it be for them to frame up, out of an arrest for some petty affair, a "case" that would justify the government's expenditure on "security". As for the number of people ready to help us, we referred in the preceding chapter to the gigantic change that has taken place in this respect in the last five years or so. On the other hand, in order to unite all these tiny fractions into one whole, in order not to break up the movement while breaking up its functions, and in order to imbue the people who carry out the minute functions with the conviction that their work is necessary and important, without which conviction they will never do the work,* it is necessary to have a strong organisation of tried revolutionaries. The more secret such an organisation is, the stronger and more widespread will be the confidence in the Party. As we know, in time of war, it is not only of the utmost importance to imbue one's own army with confidence in its strength, but it is important also to convince the enemy and all *neutral* elements of this strength;

* I recall that once a comrade told me of a factory inspector who wanted to help the Social-Democrats, and actually did, but complained bitterly that he did not know whether his "information" reached the proper revolutionary centre, how much his help was really required, and what possibilities there were for utilising his small and petty services. Every practical worker can, of course, cite many similar instances in which our primitiveness deprived us of allies. These services, each "small" in itself, but invaluable when taken in the mass, could and would be rendered to us by office employees and officials, not only in factories, but in the postal service, on the railways, in the Customs, among the nobility, among the clergy, and in *every* other walk of life, including even the police and the Court! Had we a real party, a real militant organisation of revolutionaries, we would not make undue demands on every one of these "aides", we would not hasten always and invariably to bring them right into the very heart of our "illegality", but, on the contrary, we would husband them most carefully and would even train people especially for such functions, bearing in mind that many students could be of much greater service to the Party as "aides" holding some official post than as "short-term" revolutionaries. But, I repeat, only an organisation that is firmly established and has no lack of active forces would have the right to apply such tactics.

friendly neutrality may sometimes decide the issue. If such an organisation existed, one built up on a firm theoretical foundation and possessing a Social-Democratic organ, we should have no reason to fear that the movement might be diverted from its path by the numerous "outside" elements that are attracted to it. (On the contrary, it is precisely at the present time, with amateurism prevalent, that we see many Social-Democrats leaning towards the *Credo* and only imagining that they are Social-Democrats.) In a word, specialisation necessarily presupposes centralisation, and in turn imperatively calls for it.

But B—v himself, who has so excellently described the necessity for specialisation, underestimates its importance, in our opinion, in the second part of the argument we have quoted. The number of working-class revolutionaries is inadequate, he says. This is perfectly true, and once again we stress that the "valuable communication of a close observer" fully confirms our view of the causes of the present crisis in Social-Democracy, and, consequently, of the means required to overcome it. Not only are revolutionaries in general lagging behind the spontaneous awakening of the masses, but even worker-revolutionaries are lagging behind the spontaneous awakening of the working-class masses. This *fact* confirms with clear evidence, from the "practical" point of view, too, not only the absurdity but even the *politically reactionary nature* of the "pedagogics" to which we are so often treated in the discussion of our duties to the workers. This fact proves that our very first and most pressing duty is to help to train working-class revolutionaries who will be on the same level *in regard to Party activity* as the revolutionaries from amongst the intellectuals (we emphasise the words "in regard to Party activity", for, although necessary, it is neither so easy nor so pressingly necessary to bring the workers up to the level of intellectuals in other respects). Attention, therefore, must be devoted *principally* to *raising* the workers to the level of revolutionaries; it is not at all our task *to descend* to the level of the "working masses" as the Economists wish to do, or to the level of the "average worker" as *Svoboda* desires to do (and by this ascends to the second grade of Economist "pedagogics"). I am far from denying the necessity

for popular literature for the workers, and especially popular (of course, not vulgar) literature for the especially backward workers. But what annoys me is this constant confusion of pedagogics with questions of politics and organisation. You, gentlemen, who are so much concerned about the "average worker", as a matter of fact, rather insult the workers by your desire *to talk down* to them when discussing working-class politics and working-class organisation. Talk about serious things in a serious manner; leave pedagogics to the pedagogues, and not to politicians and organisers! Are there not advanced people, "average people", and "masses" among the intelligentsia too? Does not everyone recognise that popular literature is also required for the intelligentsia, and is not such literature written? Imagine someone, in an article on organising college or high-school students, repeating over and over again, as if he had made a new discovery, that first of all we must have an organisation of "average students". The author of such an article would be ridiculed, and rightly so. Give us your ideas on organisation, if you have any, he would be told, and we ourselves will decide who is "average", who above average, and who below. But if you have no organisational ideas *of your own*, then all your exertions in behalf of the "masses" and "average people" will be simply boring. You must realise that these questions of "politics" and "organisation" are so serious in themselves that they cannot be dealt with in any other but a serious way. We can and must *educate* workers (and university and Gymnasium students) so that we *may be able to discuss* these questions with them. But once you do bring up these questions, you must give real replies to them; do not fall back on the "average", or on the "masses"; do not try to dispose of the matter with facetious remarks and mere phrases.*

* *Svoboda*, No. 1, p. 66, in the article "Organisation": "The heavy tread of the army of workers will reinforce all the demands that will be advanced in behalf of Russian Labour"—Labour with a capital L, of course. And the author exclaims: "I am not in the least hostile towards the intelligentsia, but [*but*—the word that Shchedrin translated as meaning: The ears never grow higher than the forehead!]—but I always get frightfully annoyed when a man comes to me uttering beautiful and charming words and demands that they be accepted for their [his?] beauty and other virtues" (p. 62). Yes, I "always get frightfully annoyed", too.

To be fully prepared for his task, the worker-revolutionary must likewise become a professional revolutionary. Hence B—v is wrong in saying that since the worker spends eleven and a half hours in the factory, the brunt of all other revolutionary functions (apart from agitation) "*must necessarily* fall mainly upon the shoulders of an extremely small force of intellectuals". But this condition does not obtain out of sheer "necessity". It obtains because we are backward, because we do not recognise our duty to assist every capable worker to become a *professional* agitator, organiser, propagandist, literature distributor, etc., etc. In this respect, we waste our strength in a positively shameful manner; we lack the ability to husband that which should be tended and reared with special care. Look at the Germans: their forces are a hundredfold greater than ours. But they understand perfectly well that really capable agitators, etc., are not often promoted from the ranks of the "average". For this reason they immediately try to place every capable working man in conditions that will enable him to develop and apply his abilities to the fullest: he is made a professional agitator, he is encouraged to widen the field of his activity, to spread it from one factory to the whole of the industry, from a single locality to the whole country. He acquires experience and dexterity in his profession; he broadens his outlook and increases his knowledge; he observes at close quarters the prominent political leaders from other localities and of other parties; he strives to rise to their level and combine in himself the knowledge of the working-class environment and the freshness of socialist convictions with professional skill, without which the proletariat *cannot* wage a stubborn struggle against its excellently trained enemies. In this way alone do the working masses produce men of the stamp of Bebel and Auer. But what is to a great extent automatic in a politically free country must in Russia be done deliberately and systematically by our organisations. A worker-agitator who is at all gifted and "promising" *must not be left* to work eleven hours a day in a factory. We must arrange that he be maintained by the Party; that he may go underground in good time; that he change the place of his activity, if he is to enlarge his experience, widen his outlook, and be

able to hold out for at least a few years in the struggle against the gendarmes. As the spontaneous rise of their movement becomes broader and deeper, the working-class masses promote from their ranks not only an increasing number of talented agitators, but also talented organisers, propagandists, and "practical workers" in the best sense of the term (of whom there are so few among our intellectuals who, for the most part, in the Russian manner, are somewhat careless and sluggish in their habits). When we have forces of specially trained worker-revolutionaries who have gone through extensive preparation (and, of course, revolutionaries "of all arms of the service"), no political police in the world will then be able to contend with them, for these forces, boundlessly devoted to the revolution, will enjoy the boundless confidence of the widest masses of the workers. We are directly *to blame* for doing too little to "stimulate" the workers to take this path, common to them and to the "intellectuals", of professional revolutionary training, and for all too often dragging them back by our silly speeches about what is "accessible" to the masses of the workers, to the "average workers", etc.

In this, as in other respects, the narrow scope of our organisational work is without a doubt due directly to the fact (although the overwhelming majority of the "Economists" and the novices in practical work do not perceive it) that we restrict our theories and our political tasks to a narrow field. Subservience to spontaneity seems to inspire a fear of taking even one step away from what is "accessible" to the masses, a fear of rising too high above mere attendance on the immediate and direct requirements of the masses. Have no fear, gentlemen! Remember that we stand so low on the plane of organisation that the very idea that we *could* rise *too* high is absurd!

E. "CONSPIRATORIAL" ORGANISATION AND "DEMOCRATISM"

Yet there are many people among us who are so sensitive to the "voice of life" that they fear it more than anything in the world and charge the adherents of the views here expounded with following a Narodnaya Volya line,

with failing to understand "democratism", etc. These accusations, which, of course, have been echoed by *Rabocheye Dyelo*, need to be dealt with.

The writer of these lines knows very well that the St. Petersburg Economists levelled the charge of Narodnaya Volya tendencies also against *Rabochaya Gazeta* (which is quite understandable when one compares it with *Rabochaya Mysl*). We were not in the least surprised, therefore, when, soon after the appearance of *Iskra*, a comrade informed us that the Social-Democrats in the town of X describe *Iskra* as a Narodnaya Volya organ. We, of course, were flattered by this accusation; for what decent Social-Democrat has not been accused by the Economists of being a Narodnaya Volya sympathiser?

These accusations are the result of a twofold misunderstanding. First, the history of the revolutionary movement is so little known among us that the name "Narodnaya Volya" is used to denote any idea of a militant centralised organisation which declares determined war upon tsarism. But the magnificent organisation that the revolutionaries had in the seventies, and that should serve us as a model, was not established by the Narodnaya Volya, but by the *Zemlya i Volya*, which split up into the Chorny Peredel and the Narodnaya Volya. Consequently, to regard a militant revolutionary organisation as something specifically Narodnaya Volya in character is absurd both historically and logically; for *no* revolutionary trend, if it seriously thinks of struggle, can dispense with such an organisation. The mistake the Narodnaya Volya committed was not in striving to enlist *all* the discontented in the organisation and to direct this organisation to resolute struggle against the autocracy; on the contrary, that was its great historical merit. The mistake was in relying on a theory which in substance was not a revolutionary theory at all, and the Narodnaya Volya members either did not know how, or were unable, to link their movement inseparably with the class struggle in the developing capitalist society. Only a gross failure to understand Marxism (or an "understanding" of it in the spirit of "Struve-ism") could prompt the opinion that the rise of a mass, spontaneous working-class movement *relieves* us of the duty of creating as good an organisation of revolutionaries as the

Zemlya i Volya had, or, indeed, an incomparably better one. On the contrary, this movement *imposes* the duty upon us; for the spontaneous struggle of the proletariat will not become its genuine "class struggle" until this struggle is led by a strong organisation of revolutionaries.

Secondly, many people, including apparently B. Krichevsky (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 18), misunderstand the polemics that Social-Democrats have always waged against the "conspiratorial" view of the political struggle. We have always protested, and will, of course, continue to protest against *confining* the political struggle to conspiracy.* But this does not, of course, mean that we deny the need for a strong revolutionary organisation. Thus, in the pamphlet mentioned in the preceding footnote, after the polemics against reducing the political struggle to a conspiracy, a description is given (as a Social-Democratic ideal) of an organisation so strong as to be able to "resort to ... rebellion" and to every other form of attack, in order to "deliver a smashing blow against absolutism".** In *form* such a strong revolutionary organisation in an autocratic country may also be described as a "conspiratorial" organisation, because the French word "conspiration" is the equivalent of the Russian word "*zagovar*" ("conspiracy"), and such an organisation must have the utmost secrecy. Secrecy is such a necessary condition for this kind of organisation that all the other conditions (number and selection of members, functions,

* Cf. *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*, p. 21, polemics against P. L. Lavrov. (See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 340-41.—*Ed.*)

** *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*, p. 23. (See present edition, Vol. 2, p. 342.—*Ed.*) Apropos, we shall give another illustration of the fact that *Rabocheye Dyelo* either does not understand what it is talking about or changes its views "with the wind". In No. 1 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, we find the following passage in italics: "*The substance set forth in the pamphlet accords entirely with the editorial programme of Rabocheye Dyelo*" (p. 142). Really? Does the view that the overthrow of the autocracy must not be set as the first task of the mass movement accord with the views expressed in *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*? Do the theory of "the economic struggle against the employers and the government" and the stages theory accord with the views expressed in that pamphlet? We leave it to the reader to judge whether a periodical that understands the meaning of "accordance in opinion" in this peculiar manner can have firm principles.

etc.) must be made to conform to it. It would be extremely naïve indeed, therefore, to fear the charge that we Social-Democrats desire to create a conspiratorial organisation. Such a charge should be as flattering to every opponent of Economism as the charge of following a Narodnaya Volya line.

The objection may be raised that such a powerful and strictly secret organisation, which concentrates in its hands all the threads of secret activities, an organisation which of necessity is centralised, may too easily rush into a premature attack, may thoughtlessly intensify the movement before the growth of political discontent, the intensity of the ferment and anger of the working class, etc., have made such an attack possible and necessary. Our reply to this is: Speaking abstractly, it cannot be denied, of course, that a militant organisation *may* thoughtlessly engage in battle, which *may* end in a defeat entirely avoidable under other conditions. But we cannot confine ourselves to abstract reasoning on such a question, because every battle bears within itself the abstract possibility of defeat, and there is no way of *reducing* this possibility except by organised preparation for battle. If, however, we proceed from the concrete conditions at present obtaining in Russia, we must come to the positive conclusion that a strong revolutionary organisation is absolutely necessary precisely for the purpose of giving stability to the movement and of *safeguarding* it against the possibility of making thoughtless attacks. Precisely at the present time, when no such organisation yet exists, and when the revolutionary movement is rapidly and spontaneously growing, we *already observe* two opposite extremes (which, as is to be expected, "meet"). These are: the utterly unsound Economism and the preaching of moderation, and the equally unsound "excitative terror", which strives "artificially to call forth symptoms of the end of the movement, which is developing and strengthening itself, when this movement is as yet nearer to the start than to the end" (V. Zasulich, in *Zarya*, No. 2-3, p. 353). And the instance of *Rabocheye Dyelo* shows that *there exist* Social-Democrats who give way to both these extremes. This is not surprising, for, apart from other reasons, the "economic struggle against the employers and the government"

can *never* satisfy revolutionaries, and opposite extremes will therefore always appear here and there. Only a centralised, militant organisation that consistently carries out a Social-Democratic policy, that satisfies, so to speak, all revolutionary instincts and strivings, can safeguard the movement against making thoughtless attacks and prepare attacks that hold out the promise of success.

A further objection may be raised, that the views on organisation here expounded contradict the "democratic principle". Now, while the earlier accusation was specifically Russian in origin, this one is *specifically foreign* in character. And only an organisation abroad (the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad) was capable of giving its Editorial Board instructions like the following:

"*Organisational Principle*. In order to secure the successful development and unification of Social-Democracy, the broad democratic principle of Party organisation must be emphasised, developed, and fought for; this is particularly necessary in view of the anti-democratic tendencies that have revealed themselves in the ranks of our Party" (*Two Conferences*, p. 18).

We shall see in the next chapter how *Rabocheye Dyelo* combats *Iskra*'s "anti-democratic tendencies". For the present, we shall examine more closely the "principle" that the Economists advance. Everyone will probably agree that "the broad democratic principle" presupposes the two following conditions: first, full publicity, and secondly, election to all offices. It would be absurd to speak of democracy without publicity, moreover, without a publicity that is not limited to the membership of the organisation. We call the German Socialist Party a democratic organisation because all its activities are carried out publicly; even its party congresses are held in public. But no one would call an organisation democratic that is hidden from every one but its members by a veil of secrecy. What is the use, then, of advancing "the *broad* democratic principle" when the fundamental condition for this principle *cannot be fulfilled* by a secret organisation? "The broad principle" proves itself simply to be a resounding but hollow phrase. Moreover, it reveals a total lack of understanding of the urgent tasks of the moment in regard to organisation. Everyone knows how great the lack of secrecy is among the "broad" masses

of our revolutionaries. We have heard the bitter complaints of B—v on this score and his absolutely just demand for a "strict selection of members" (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 6, p. 42). Yet, persons who boast a keen "sense of realities" *urge*, in a situation like this, not the strictest secrecy and the strictest (consequently, more restricted) selection, of members, but "the *broad* democratic principle"! This is what you call being wide of the mark.

Nor is the situation any better with regard to the second attribute of democracy, the principle of election. In politically free countries, this condition is taken for granted. "They are members of the Party who accept the principles of the Party programme and render the Party all possible support," reads Clause 1 of the Rules of the German Social-Democratic Party. Since the entire political arena is as open to the public view as is a theatre stage to the audience, this acceptance or non-acceptance, support or opposition, is known to all from the press and from public meetings. Everyone knows that a certain political figure began in such and such a way, passed through such and such an evolution, behaved in a trying moment in such and such a manner, and possesses such and such qualities; consequently, *all* party members, knowing all the facts, can elect or refuse to elect this person to a particular party office. The general control (in the literal sense of the term) exercised over every act of a party man in the political field brings into existence an automatically operating mechanism which produces what in biology is called the "survival of the fittest". "Natural selection" by full publicity, election, and general control provides the assurance that, in the last analysis, every political figure will be "in his proper place", do the work for which he is best fitted by his powers and abilities, feel the effects of his mistakes on himself, and prove before all the world his ability to recognise mistakes and to avoid them.

Try to fit this picture into the frame of our autocracy! Is it conceivable in Russia for all who accept the principles of the Party programme and render the Party all possible support to control every action of the revolutionary working in secret? Is it possible for all to elect one of these revolutionaries to any particular office, when, in the very interests of the work, the revolutionary *must* conceal his iden-

tity from nine out of ten of these "all"? Reflect somewhat over the real meaning of the high-sounding phrases to which *Rabocheye Dyelo* gives utterance, and you will realise that "broad democracy" in Party organisation, amidst the gloom of the autocracy and the domination of gendarmerie, is nothing more than a *useless and harmful toy*. It is a useless toy because, in point of fact, no revolutionary organisation has ever practiced, or could practice, broad democracy, however much it may have desired to do so. It is a harmful toy because any attempt to practise "the broad democratic principle" will simply facilitate the work of the police in carrying out large-scale raids, will perpetuate the prevailing primitiveness, and will divert the thoughts of the practical workers from the serious and pressing task of training themselves to become professional revolutionaries to that of drawing up detailed "paper" rules for election systems. Only abroad, where very often people with no opportunity for conducting really active work gather, could this "playing at democracy" develop here and there, especially in small groups.

To show the unseemliness of *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s favourite trick of advancing the plausible "principle" of democracy in revolutionary affairs, we shall again summon a witness. This witness, Y. Serebryakov, editor of the London magazine, *Nakanune*, has a soft spot for *Rabocheye Dyelo* and is filled with a great hatred for Plekhanov and the "Plekhanovites". In its articles on the split in the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, *Nakanune* definitely sided with *Rabocheye Dyelo* and poured a stream of petty abuse upon Plekhanov. All the more valuable, therefore, is this witness in the question at issue. In *Nakanune* for July (No. 7) 1899, an article entitled "Concerning the Manifesto of the Self-Emancipation of the Workers Group", Serebryakov argued that it was "indecent" to talk about such things as "self-deception, leadership, and the so-called Areopagus in a serious revolutionary movement" and, *inter alia*, wrote:

"Myshkin, Rogachov, Zhelyabov, Mikhailov, Perovskaya, Figner, and others never regarded themselves as leaders, and no one ever elected or appointed them as such, although in actuality, they were leaders, because, in the propaganda period, as well as in the period of the struggle against the government, they took the brunt of the work upon themselves, they went into the most dangerous places, and their

activities were the most fruitful. They became leaders, not because they wished it, but because the comrades surrounding them had confidence in their wisdom, in their energy, in their loyalty. To be afraid of some kind of Areopagus (if it is not feared, why write about it?) that would arbitrarily govern the movement is far too naïve. Who would pay heed to it?"

We ask the reader, in what way does the "Areopagus" differ from "anti-democratic tendencies"? And is it not evident that *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s "plausible" organisational principle is equally naïve and indecent; naïve, because no one would pay heed to the "Areopagus", or people with "anti- democratic tendencies", if "the comrades surrounding them had" no "confidence in their wisdom, energy, and loyalty"; indecent, because it is a demagogic sally calculated to play on the conceit of some, on the ignorance of others regarding the actual state of our movement, and on the lack of training and the ignorance of the history of the revolutionary movement on the part of still others. The only serious organisational principle for the active workers of our movement should be the strictest secrecy, the strictest selection of members, and the training of professional revolutionaries. Given these qualities, something even more than "democratism" would be guaranteed to us, namely, complete, comradely, mutual confidence among revolutionaries. This is absolutely essential for us, because there can be no question of replacing it by general democratic control in Russia. It would be a great mistake to believe that the impossibility of establishing real "democratic" control renders the members of the revolutionary organisation beyond control altogether. They have not the time to think about toy forms of democratism (democratism within a close and compact body of comrades in which complete, mutual confidence prevails), but they have a lively sense of their *responsibility*, knowing as they do from experience that an organisation of real revolutionaries will stop at nothing to rid itself of an unworthy member. Moreover, there is a fairly well-developed public opinion in Russian (and international) revolutionary circles which has a long history behind it, and which sternly and ruthlessly punishes every departure from the duties of comradeship (and "democratism", real and not toy democratism, certainly forms a component part of the conception of

comradeship). Take all this into consideration and you will realise that this talk and these resolutions about "anti-democratic tendencies" have the musty odour of the playing at generals which is indulged in abroad.

It must be observed also that the other source of this talk, viz., naïveté, is likewise fostered by the confusion of ideas concerning the meaning of democracy. In Mr. and Mrs. Webb's book on the English trade unions there is an interesting chapter entitled "Primitive Democracy". In it the authors relate how the English workers, in the first period of existence of their unions, considered it an indispensable sign of democracy for all the members to do all the work of managing the unions; not only were all questions decided by the vote of all the members, but all official duties were fulfilled by all the members in turn. A long period of historical experience was required for workers to realise the absurdity of such a conception of democracy and to make them understand the necessity for representative institutions, on the one hand, and for full-time officials, on the other. Only after a number of cases of financial bankruptcy of trade-union treasuries had occurred did the workers realise that the rates of contributions and benefits cannot be decided merely by a democratic vote, but that this requires also the advice of insurance experts. Let us take also Kautsky's book on parliamentarism and legislation by the people. There we find that the conclusions drawn by the Marxist theoretician coincide with the lessons learned from many years of practical experience by the workers who organised "spontaneously". Kautsky strongly protests against Rittinghausen's primitive conception of democracy; he ridicules those who in the name of democracy demand that "popular newspapers shall be edited directly by the people"; he shows the need for *professional* journalists, parliamentarians, etc., for the Social-Democratic leadership of the proletarian class struggle; he attacks the socialism of anarchists and *littérateurs* who in their "striving for effect" extol direct legislation by the whole people, completely failing to understand that this idea can be applied only relatively in modern society.

Those who have performed practical work in our movement know how widespread the "primitive" conception of democ-

racy is among the masses of the students and workers. It is not surprising that this conception penetrates also into rules of organisations and into literature. The Economists of the Bernsteinian persuasion included in their rules the following: "§ 10. All affairs affecting the interests of the whole of the union organisation shall be decided by a majority vote of all its members." The Economists of the terrorist persuasion repeat after them. "The decisions of the committee shall become effective only after they have been referred to all the circles" (*Svoboda*, No. 1, p. 67). Observe that this proposal for a widely applied referendum is advanced *in addition* to the demand that *the whole of* the organisation be built on an elective basis! We would not, of course, on this account condemn practical workers who have had too few opportunities for studying the theory and practice of real democratic organisations. But when *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which lays claim to leadership, confines itself, under such conditions, to a resolution on broad democratic principles, can this be described as anything but a mere "striving for effect"?

F. LOCAL AND ALL-RUSSIA WORK

The objections raised against the plan of organisation here outlined on the grounds that it is undemocratic and conspiratorial are totally unsound. Nevertheless, there remains a question which is frequently put and which deserves detailed examination. This is the question of the relations between local work and All-Russian work. Fears are expressed that the formation of a centralised organisation may shift the centre of gravity from the former to the latter, damage the movement through weakening our contacts with the working masses and the continuity of local agitation generally. To these fears we reply that our movement in the past few years has suffered precisely from the fact that local workers have been too absorbed in local work; that therefore it is absolutely necessary to shift the centre of gravity somewhat to national work; and that, far from weakening this would strengthen our ties and the continuity of our local agitation. Let us take the question of central and local newspapers. I would ask the reader not to forget that we cite the publication of newspapers only as *an example* illustrat-

ing an immeasurably broader and more varied revolutionary activity in general.

In the first period of the mass movement (1896-98), an attempt was made by local revolutionary workers to publish an All-Russian paper—*Rabochaya Gazeta*. In the next period (1898-1900), the movement made an enormous stride forward, but the attention of the leaders was wholly absorbed by local publications. If we compute the total number of the local papers that were published, we shall find that on the average one issue per month was published.* Does this not clearly illustrate our amateurism? Does this not clearly show that our revolutionary organisation lags behind the spontaneous growth of the movement? If *the same number* of issues had been published, not by scattered local groups, but by a single organisation, we would not only have saved an enormous amount of effort, but we would have secured immeasurably greater stability and continuity in our work. This simple point is frequently lost sight of by those practical workers who work *actively* and almost exclusively on local publications (unfortunately this is true even now in the overwhelming majority of cases), as well as by the publicists who display an astonishing quixotism on this question. The practical workers usually rest content with the argument that "it is difficult"** for local workers to engage in the organisation of an All-Russian newspaper, and that local newspapers are better than no newspapers at all. This argument is, of course, perfectly just, and we, no less than any practical worker, appreciate the enormous importance and usefulness of local newspapers *in general*. But not this is the point. The point is, can we not overcome the fragmentation and primitiveness that are so glaringly expressed in the thirty issues of local newspapers that have been published throughout Russia in the course of two and a half years? Do not restrict yourselves to the indisputable, but too

* See *Report to the Paris Congress*,[181] p. 14. "From that time (1897) to the spring of 1900, thirty issues of various papers were published in various places.... On an average, over one issue per month was published".

** This difficulty is more apparent than real. In fact, *there is not* a single local study circle that lacks the opportunity of taking up some function or other in connection with All-Russian work. "Don't say, I can't; say, I won't."

general, statement about the usefulness of local newspapers generally; have the courage frankly to admit their negative aspects revealed by the experience of two and a half years. This experience has shown that under the conditions in which we work, these local newspapers prove, in the majority of cases, to be unstable in their principles, devoid of political significance, extremely costly in regard to expenditure of revolutionary forces, and totally unsatisfactory from a technical point of view (I have in mind, of course, not the technique of printing, but the frequency and regularity of publication). These defects are not accidental; they are the inevitable outcome of the fragmentation which, on the one hand, explains the predominance of local newspapers in the period under review, and, on the other, is *fostered by* this predominance. It is positively *beyond the strength* of a separate local organisation to raise its newspaper to the level of a political organ maintaining stability of principles; it is *beyond its strength* to collect and utilise sufficient material to shed light on the whole of our political life. The argument usually advanced to support the need for numerous local newspapers in free countries that the cost of printing by local workers is low and that the people can be kept more fully and quickly informed—this *argument* as experience has shown, speaks *against* local newspapers in Russia. They turn out to be excessively costly in regard to the expenditure of revolutionary forces, and appear *very* rarely, for the simple reason that the publication of an *illegal* newspaper, however small its size, requires an extensive secret apparatus, such as is possible with large-scale factory production; for this apparatus cannot be created in a small, handicraft workshop. Very frequently, the primitiveness of the secret apparatus (every practical worker can cite numerous cases) enables the police to take advantage of the publication and distribution of one or two issues to make *mass* arrests, which result in such a clean sweep that it becomes necessary to start all over again. A well-organised secret apparatus requires professionally well-trained revolutionaries and a division of labour applied with the greatest consistency, but both these requirements are beyond the strength of a separate local organisation, however strong it may be at any given moment.

Not only the general interests of our movement as a whole (training of the workers in consistent socialist and political principles) but also specifically local interests are *better served by non-local newspapers*. This may seem paradoxical at first sight, but it has been proved to the hilt by the two and a half years of experience referred to. Everyone will agree that had all the local forces that were engaged in the publication of the thirty issues of newspapers worked on a single newspaper, sixty, if not a hundred, issues could easily have been published, with a fuller expression, in consequence, of all the specifically local features of the movement. True, it is no easy matter to attain such a degree of organisation, but we must realise the need for it. Every local study circle must think about it and *work actively* to achieve it, without waiting for an impetus from outside, without being tempted by the popularity and closer proximity of a local newspaper which, as our revolutionary experience has shown, proves to a large extent to be illusory.

And it is a bad service indeed those publicists render to the practical work who, thinking themselves particularly close to the practical workers, fail to see this illusoriness, and make shift with the astoundingly hollow and cheap argument that we must have local newspapers, we must have district newspapers, and we must have All-Russian newspapers. Generally speaking, of course, all these are necessary, but once the solution of a concrete organisational problem is undertaken, surely time and circumstances must be taken into consideration. Is it not quixotic for *Svoboda* (No. 1, p. 68) to write in a special article "dealing with *the question of a newspaper*": "It seems to us that every locality, with any appreciable number of workers, should have its own workers' newspaper; not a newspaper imported from somewhere, but its very own." If the publicist who wrote these words refuses to think of their meaning, then at least the reader may do it for him. How many scores, if not hundreds, of "localities" with any appreciable number of workers there are in Russia, and what a perpetuation of our amateurish methods this would mean if indeed every local organisation set about publishing its own newspaper! How this diffusion would facilitate the gendarmerie's task of netting—and without "any appreciable" effort—the local

revolutionary workers at the very outset of their activity and of preventing them from developing into real revolutionaries. A reader of an All-Russian newspaper, continues the author, would find little interest in the descriptions of the malpractices of the factory owners and the "details of factory life in various towns not his own". But "an inhabitant of Orel would not find Orel affairs dull reading. In every issue he would learn who had been 'picked for a lambasting' and who had been 'flayed', and he would be in high spirits" (p. 69). Certainly, the Orel reader is in high spirits, but our publicist's flights of imagination are also high—too high. He should have asked himself whether such concern with trivialities is tactically in order. We are second to none in appreciating the importance and necessity of factory exposures, but it must be borne in mind that we have reached a stage when St. Petersburg folk find it dull reading the St. Petersburg correspondence of the St. Petersburg *Rabochaya Mysl*. Leaflets are the medium through which local factory exposures have always been *and must continue* to be made, but we must raise the level of the *newspaper*, not lower it to the level of a factory leaflet. What we ask of a newspaper is not so much "petty" exposures, as exposures of the major, typical evils of factory life, exposures based on especially striking facts and capable, therefore, of arousing the interest of *all* workers and all leaders of the movement, of really enriching their knowledge, broadening their outlook, and serving as a starting-point for awakening new districts and workers from ever-newer trade areas.

"Moreover, in a local newspaper, all the malpractices of the factory administration and other authorities may be denounced then and there. In the case of a general, distant newspaper, however, by the time the news reaches it the facts will have been forgotten in the source localities. The reader, on getting the paper, will exclaim: 'When was that—who remembers it?'" (ibid.). Precisely—who remembers it! From the same source we learn that the 30 issues of newspapers which appeared in the course of two and a half years were published in six cities. This averages *one issue per city per half-year*! And even if our frivolous publicist *trebled* his estimate of the productivity of local work (which would be wrong in the case of an average town, since it is

impossible to increase productivity to any considerable extent by our rule-of-thumb methods), we would still get only one issue every two months, i.e., nothing at all like "denouncing then and there". It would suffice, however, for ten local organisations to combine and send their delegates to take an active part in organising a general newspaper, to enable us every fortnight to "denounce", *over the whole of Russia*, not petty, but really outstanding and typical evils. No one who knows the state of affairs in our organisations can have the slightest doubt on that score. As for catching the enemy red-handed—if we mean it seriously and not merely as a pretty phrase—that is quite beyond the ability of an illegal paper generally. It can be done only by a leaflet, because the time limit for exposures of that nature can be a day or two at the most (e.g., the usual brief strikes, violent factory clashes, demonstrations, etc.).

"The workers live not only at the factory, but also in the city," continues our author, rising from the particular to the general, with a strict consistency that would have done honour to Boris Krichevsky himself; and he refers to matters like municipal councils, municipal hospitals, municipal schools, and demands that workers' newspapers should not ignore municipal affairs in general.

This demand—excellent in itself—serves as a particularly vivid illustration of the empty abstraction to which discussions of local newspapers are all too frequently limited. In the first place, if indeed newspapers appeared "in every locality with any appreciable number of workers" with such detailed information on municipal affairs as *Svoboda* desires, this would, under our Russian conditions, inevitably degenerate into actual concern with trivialities, lead to a weakening of the consciousness of the importance of an All-Russian revolutionary assault upon the tsarist autocracy, and strengthen the extremely virile shoots—not uprooted but rather hidden or temporarily suppressed—of the tendency that has become noted as a result of the famous remark about revolutionaries who talk a great deal about non-existent parliaments and too little about existent municipal councils. We say "inevitably", in order to emphasise that *Svoboda* obviously does not desire this, but the contrary, to come about. But good intentions are not enough. For municipal affairs

to be dealt with in their proper perspective, in relation to our entire work, this perspective must *first* be clearly conceived, firmly established, not only by argument, but by numerous examples, so that it may acquire the stability of a *tradition*. This is still far from being the case with us. Yet this must be done *first*, before we can allow ourselves to think and talk about an extensive local press.

Secondly, to write really well and interestingly about municipal affairs, one must have first-hand knowledge, not book knowledge, of the issues. But there are hardly any Social-Democrats *anywhere in Russia* who possess such knowledge. To be able to write in newspapers (not in popular pamphlets) about municipal and state affairs, one must have fresh and varied material gathered and written up by able people. And in order to be able to gather and write up such material, we must have something more than the "primitive democracy" of a primitive circle, in which everybody does everything and all entertain themselves by playing at referendums. It is necessary to have a staff of expert writers and correspondents, an army of Social-Democratic reporters who establish contacts far and wide, who are able to fathom all sorts of "state secrets" (the knowledge of which makes the Russian government official so puffed up, but the blabbing of which is such an easy matter to him), who are able to penetrate "behind the scenes"—an army of people who must, as their "official duty", be ubiquitous and omniscient. And we, the Party that fights against *all* economic, political, social, and national oppression, can and must find, gather, train, mobilise, and set into motion such an army of omniscient people—all of which requires still to be done. Not only has not a single step in this direction been taken in the overwhelming majority of localities, but even the *recognition* of its necessity is very often lacking. One will search in vain in our Social-Democratic press for lively and interesting articles, correspondence, and exposures dealing with our big and little affairs—diplomatic, military, ecclesiastical, municipal, financial, etc., etc. There is *almost nothing*, or very little, about these matters.* That is why

* That is why even examples of exceptionally good local newspapers fully confirm our point of view. For example, *Yuzhny Rabochy*[182] is an excellent newspaper, entirely free of instability of prin-

"it always annoys me frightfully when a man comes to me, utters beautiful and charming words" about the need for newspapers in "every locality with any appreciable number of workers" that will expose factory, municipal, and government evils.

The predominance of the local papers over a central press may be a sign of either poverty or luxury. Of poverty, when the movement has not yet developed the forces for large-scale production, continues to flounder in amateurism, and is all but swamped with "the petty details of factory life". Of luxury, when the movement *has fully mastered* the task of comprehensive exposure and comprehensive agitation, and it becomes necessary to publish numerous local newspapers in addition to the central organ. Let each decide for himself what the predominance of local newspapers implies in present-day Russia. I shall limit myself to a precise formulation of my own conclusion, to leave no grounds for misunderstanding. Hitherto, the majority of our local organisations have thought almost exclusively in terms of local newspapers, and have devoted almost all their activities to this work. This is abnormal; the very opposite should have been the case. The majority of the local organisations should think principally of the publication of an All-Russian newspaper and devote their activities chiefly to it. Until this is done, we shall *not* be able to establish a *single* newspaper capable, to any degree, of serving the movement with *comprehensive* press agitation. When this is done, however, normal relations between the necessary central newspaper and the necessary local newspapers will be established automatically.

---

ciple. But it has been unable to provide what it desired for the local movement, owing to the infrequency of its publication and to extensive police raids. Principled presentation of the fundamental questions of the movement and wide political agitation, which our Party most urgently requires at the present time, has proved too big a job for the local newspaper. The material of particular value it has published, like the articles on the mine owners' convention and on unemployment, was not strictly local material, *it was required for the whole of Russia*, not for the South alone. No such articles have appeared in any of our Social-Democratic newspapers.

* * *

It would seem at first glance that the conclusion on the necessity for shifting the centre of gravity from local to All-Russian work does not apply to the sphere of the specifically economic struggle. In this struggle, the immediate enemies of the workers are the individual employers or groups of employers, who are not bound by any organisation having even the remotest resemblance to the purely military, strictly centralised organisation of the Russian Government—our immediate enemy in the political struggle—which is led in all its minutest details by a single will.

But that is not the case. As we have repeatedly pointed out, the economic struggle is a trade struggle, and for that reason it requires that the workers be organised according to trades, not only according to place of employment. Organisation by trades becomes all the more urgently necessary, the more rapidly our employers organise in all sorts of companies and syndicates. Our fragmentation and our amateurism are an outright hindrance to this work of organisation which requires the existence of a single, All-Russian body of revolutionaries capable of giving leadership to the All-Russian trade unions. We have described above the type of organisation that is needed for this purpose; we shall now add but a few words on the question of our press in this connection.

Hardly anyone will doubt the necessity for every Social-Democratic newspaper to have *a special department* devoted to the trade-union (economic) struggle. But the growth of the trade-union movement compels us to think about the creation of a trade-union press. It seems to us, however, that with rare exceptions, there can be no question of trade-union newspapers in Russia at the present time; they would be a luxury, and many a time we lack even our daily bread. The form of trade-union press that would suit the conditions of our illegal work and is already required at the present time is *trade-union pamphlets*. In these pamphlets, *legal** and illegal material should be

* Legal material is particularly important in this connection, and we are particularly behind in our ability to gather and utilise it systematically. It would not be an exaggeration to say that one could

gathered and grouped systematically, on the working conditions in a given trade, on the differences in this respect in the various parts of Russia; on the main demands advanced by the workers in the given trade; on the inadequacies of legislation affecting that trade; on outstanding instances of economic struggle by the workers in the trade; on the beginnings, the present state, and the requirements of their trade-union organisation, etc. Such pamphlets would, in the first place, relieve our Social-Democratic press of a mass of trade details that are of interest only to workers in the given trade. Secondly, they would record the results of our experience in the trade-union struggle, they would preserve the gathered material, which now literally gets lost in a mass of leaflets and fragmentary correspondence; and they would summarise this material. Thirdly, they could serve as guides for agitators, because working conditions change relatively slowly and the main demands of the workers in a given trade are extremely stable (cf., for example, the demands advanced by the weavers in the Moscow district in 1885 and in the St. Petersburg district in 1896). A compilation of such demands and needs might serve for years as an excel-

---

somehow compile a trade-union pamphlet on the basis solely of legal material, but it could not be done on the basis of illegal material alone. In gathering illegal material from workers on questions like those dealt with in the publications of *Rabochaya Mysl*, we waste a great deal of the efforts of revolutionaries (whose place in this work could very easily be taken by legal workers), and yet we never obtain good material. The reason is that a worker who very often knows only a single department of a large factory and almost always the economic results, but not the general conditions and standards of his work, cannot acquire the knowledge which is possessed by the office staff of a factory, by inspectors, doctors, etc., and which is scattered in petty newspaper reports and in special industrial, medical, Zemstvo, and other publications.

I vividly recall my "first experiment", which I would never like to repeat. I spent many weeks "examining" a worker, who would often visit me, regarding every aspect of the conditions prevailing in the enormous factory at which he was employed. True, after great effort, I managed to obtain material for a description (of the one single factory!), but at the end of the interview the worker would wipe the sweat from his brow, and say to me smilingly: 'I find it easier to work overtime than to answer your questions."

The more energetically we carry on our revolutionary struggle, the more the government will be compelled to legalise part of the "trade-union" work, thereby relieving us of part of our burden.

lent handbook for agitators on economic questions in backward localities or among the backward strata of the workers. Examples of successful strikes in a given region, information on higher living standards, on improved working conditions, in one locality, would encourage the workers in other localities to take up the fight again and again. Fourthly, having made a start in generalising the trade-union struggle and in this way strengthening the link between the Russian trade-union movement and socialism, the Social-Democrats would at the same time see to it that our trade-union work occupied neither too small nor too large a place in our Social-Democratic work as a whole. A local organisation that is cut off from organisations in other towns finds it very difficult, sometimes almost impossible, to maintain a correct sense of proportion (the example of *Rabochaya Mysl* shows what a monstrous exaggeration can be made in the direction of trade-unionism) But an All-Russian organisation of revolutionaries that stands undeviatingly on the basis of Marxism, that leads the entire political struggle and possesses a staff of professional agitators, will never find it difficult to determine the proper proportion.

V

THE "PLAN" FOR AN ALL-RUSSIA POLITICAL NEWSPAPER

"The most serious blunder *Iskra* committed in this connection" writes B. Krichevsky (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 30), charging us with a tendency to "convert theory into a lifeless doctrine by isolating it from practice", "was its 'plan' for a general party organisation" (viz., the article entitled "Where To Begin"*). Martynov echoes this idea in declaring that "*Iskra*'s tendency to belittle the significance of the forward march of the drab everyday struggle in comparison with the propaganda of brilliant and completed ideas ... was crowned with the plan for the organisation of a party which it sets forth in the article entitled 'Where To Begin' in issue No. 4" (ibid., p. 61). Finally, L. Nadezhdin

* See present volume, pp. 13-24.—*Ed.*

has of late joined in the chorus of indignation against this "plan" (the quotation marks were meant to express sarcasm). In his pamphlet, which we have just received, entitled *The Eve of the Revolution* (published by the "Revolutionary-Socialist Group" *Svoboda*, whose acquaintance we have made), he declares (p. 126): "To speak now of an organisation held together by an All-Russian newspaper means propagating armchair ideas and armchair work" and represents a manifestation of "bookishness", etc.

That our terrorist turns out to be in agreement with the champions of the "forward march of the drab everyday struggle" is not surprising, since we have traced the roots of this intimacy between them in the chapters on politics and organisation. But we must draw attention here to the fact that Nadezhdin is the only one who has conscientiously tried to grasp the train of thought in an article he disliked and has made an attempt to reply to the point, whereas *Rabocheye Dyelo*, has said nothing that is material to the subject, but has tried merely to confuse the question by a series of unseemly, demagogic sallies. Unpleasant though the task may be, we must first spend some time in cleansing this Augean stable.

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

A. WHO WAS OFFENDED BY THE ARTICLE "WHERE TO BEGIN"

Let us present a small selection of the expletives and exclamations that *Rabocheye Dyelo* hurled at us. "It is not a newspaper that can create a party organisation, but vice versa...." A newspaper, standing *above* the party, *outside of its control*, and independent of it, thanks to its having its own staff of agents...." "By what miracle has *Iskra* forgotten about the actually existing Social-Democratic organisations of the party to which it belongs?..." "Those who possess firm principles and a corresponding plan are the supreme regulators of the real struggle of the party and dictate to it their plan...." "The plan drives our active and virile organisations into the kingdom of shadows and desires to call into being a fantastic network of agents...." "Were *Iskra*'s plan carried into effect, every trace of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which is taking shape, would be

obliterated....” “A propagandist organ becomes an uncontrolled autocratic law-maker for the entire practical revolutionary struggle....” “How should our Party react to the suggestion that it be *completely* subordinated to an autonomous editorial board?”, etc., etc.

As the reader can see from the contents and the tone of these above quotations, *Rabocheye Dyelo has taken offence*. Offence, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the organisations and committees of our Party which it alleges *Iskra* desires to drive into the kingdom of shadows and whose very traces it would obliterate. How terrible! But a curious thing should be noted. The article “Where To Begin” appeared in May 1901. The articles in *Rabocheye Dyelo* appeared in September 1901. Now we are in mid-January 1902. During these five months (prior to and after September), *not a single* committee and *not a single* organisation of the Party protested formally against this monster that seeks to drive them into the kingdom of shadows; and yet scores and hundreds of communications from all parts of Russia have appeared during this period in *Iskra*, as well as in numerous local and non-local publications. How could it happen that those who would be driven into the realm of shadows are not aware of it and have not taken offence, though a third party has?

The explanation is that the committees and other organisations are engaged in real work and are not playing at “democracy”. The committees read the article “Where To Begin”, saw that it represented an attempt “to elaborate a definite plan for an organisation, *so that its formation may be undertaken from all aspects*”; and since they knew and saw very well that *not one* of these “sides” would dream of “setting about to build it” until it was convinced of its necessity, and of the correctness of the architectural plan, it has naturally never occurred to them to take offence at the boldness of the people who said in *Iskra*: “In view of the pressing importance of the question we, on our part, take the liberty of submitting to the comrades a skeleton plan to be developed in greater detail in a pamphlet now in preparation for the print.” With a conscientious approach to the work, was it possible to view things otherwise than that if the comrades *accepted* the plan submitted to them, they would carry it

out, not because they are "subordinate", but because they would be convinced of its necessity for our common cause, and that if they *did not accept it*, then the "skeleton" (a pretentious word, is it not?) would remain merely a skeleton? Is it not demagogy to fight against the skeleton of a plan, not only by "picking it to pieces" and advising comrades to reject it, but by *inciting* people inexperienced in revolutionary matters against its authors *merely on the grounds* that they *dare* to "legislate" and come out as the "supreme regulators", i.e., because they dare *to propose* an outline of a plan? Can our Party develop and make progress if an attempt to *raise* local functionaries to broader views, tasks, plans, etc., is objected to, not only with the claim that these views are erroneous, but on the grounds that the very "desire" to "*raise*" us gives "offence"? Nadezhdin, too, "picked" our plan "to pieces", but he did not sink to such demagogy as cannot be explained solely by naïveté or by primitiveness of political views. From the outset, he emphatically rejected the charge that we intended to establish an "inspectorship over the Party". That is why Nadezhdin's criticism of the plan can and should be answered on its merits, while *Rabocheye Dyelo* deserves only to be treated with contempt.

But contempt for a writer who sinks so low as to shout about autocracy and "subordination" does not relieve us of the duty of disentangling the confusion that such people create in the minds of their readers. Here we can clearly demonstrate to the world the nature of catchwords like "broad democracy". We are accused of forgetting the committees, of desiring or attempting to drive them into the kingdom of shadows, etc. How can we reply to these charges when, out of considerations of secrecy, we *can give* the reader *almost no facts* regarding our real relationships with the committees? Persons hurling vehement accusations calculated to provoke the crowd prove to be ahead of us because of their brazenness and their disregard of the duty of a revolutionary to conceal carefully from the eyes of the world the relationships and contacts which he maintains, which he is establishing or trying to establish. Naturally, we refuse once and for all to compete with such people in the field of "democratism". As to the reader who is not initiated in all Party affairs, the only way in which we can discharge our duty to him is to

acquaint him, not with what is and what is *im Werden* but with *a particle* of what has taken place and what may be told as a thing of the past.

The Bund hints that we are "impostors"*; the Union Abroad accuses us of attempting to obliterate all traces of the Party. Gentlemen, you will get complete satisfaction when we relate to the public *four facts* concerning the past.

First fact.** The members of one of the Leagues of Struggle, who took a direct part in founding our Party and in sending a delegate to the Inaugural Party Congress, reached agreement with a member of the *Iskra* group regarding the publication of a series of books for workers that were to serve the entire movement. The attempt to publish the series failed and the pamphlets written for it, *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats* and *The New Factory Law*,*** by a circuitous course and through the medium of third parties, found their way abroad, where they were published.[184]

Second fact. Members of the Central Committee of the Bund approached a member of the *Iskra* group with the proposal to organise what the Bund then described as a "literary laboratory". In making the proposal, they stated that unless this was done, the movement would greatly retrogress. The result of these negotiations was the appearance of the pamphlet *The Working-Class Cause in Russia*.****

Third fact. The Central Committee of the Bund, via a provincial town, approached a member of the *Iskra* group with the proposal that he undertake the editing of the revived *Rabochaya Gazeta* and, of course, obtained his consent. The offer was later modified: the comrade in question was invited to act as a contributor, in view of a new plan for the

---

* *Iskra*, No. 8. The reply of the Central Committee of the General Jewish Union of Russia and Poland to our article on the national question.

** We deliberately refrain from relating these facts[183] in the sequence of their occurrence.

*** See present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 323-51 and 267-315.—*Ed.*

**** The author requests me to state that, like his previous pamphlets, this one was sent to the Union Abroad on the assumption that its publications were edited by the Emancipation of Labour group (owing to certain circumstances, he could not then—February 1899—know of the change in editorship). The pamphlet will be republished by the League[185] at an early date.

composition of the Editorial Board. Also this proposal, of course, obtained his consent.[186] Articles were sent (which we managed to preserve): "Our Programme" which was a direct protest against Bernsteinism, against the change in the line of the legal literature and of *Rabochaya Mysl*; "Our Immediate Task" ("to publish a Party organ that shall appear regularly and have close contacts with all the local groups", the drawbacks of the prevailing "amateurism"); "An Urgent Question" (an examination of the objection that it is necessary *first* to develop the activities of local groups before undertaking the publication of a common organ; an insistence on the paramount importance of a "revolutionary organisation" and on the necessity of "developing organisation, discipline, and the technique of secrecy to the highest degree of perfection").* The proposal to resume publication of *Rabochaya Gazeta* was not carried out, and the articles were not published.

Fourth fact. A member of the committee that was organising the second regular congress of our Party communicated to a member of the *Iskra* group the programme of the congress and proposed that group as editorial board of the revived *Rabochaya Gazeta*. This preliminary step, as it were, was later sanctioned by the committee to which this member belonged, and by the Central Committee of the Bund.[187] The *Iskra* group was notified of the place and time of the congress and (uncertain of being able, for certain reasons, to send a delegate) drew up a written report for the congress. In the report, the idea was suggested that the mere election of a Central Committee would not only fail to solve the question of unification at a time of such complete disorder as the present, but would even compromise the grand idea of establishing a party, in the event of an early, swift, and thorough police round-up, which was more than likely in view of the prevailing lack of secrecy; that therefore, a beginning should be made by inviting all committees and all other organisations to support the revived common organ, which would establish *real* contacts between all the committees and *really* train a group of leaders for the entire movement; and that the committees and the Party would very easily

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 210-14, 215-20, 221-26.—*Ed.*

be able to transform such a group into a Central Committee as soon as the group had grown and become strong. In consequence of a number of police raids and arrests, however, the congress could not take place. For security reasons the report was destroyed, having been read only by a few comrades, including the representatives of one committee.

Let the reader now judge for himself the character of the methods employed by the Bund in hinting that we were impostors, or by *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which accuses us of trying to relegate the committees to the kingdom of shadows and to "substitute" for the organisation of a party an organisation disseminating the ideas advocated by a single newspaper. It was to the committees, *on their repeated invitation*, that we reported on the necessity for adopting a definite plan of concerted activities. It was precisely for the Party organisation that we elaborated this plan, in articles sent to *Rabochaya Gazeta*, and in the report to the Party congress, again on the invitation of those who held such an influential position in the Party that they took the initiative in its (actual) restoration. Only after the *twice* repeated attempts of the Party organisation, *in conjunction with ourselves*, *officially* to revive the central organ of the Party had failed, did we consider it our bounden duty to publish an *unofficial* organ, in order that with the *third* attempt the comrades might have before them the results of *experience* and not merely conjectural proposals. Now certain results of this experience are present for all to see, and all comrades may now judge whether we properly understood our duties and what should be thought of people that strive to mislead those unacquainted with the immediate past, simply because they are piqued at our having pointed out to some their inconsistency on the "national" question, and to others the inadmissibility of their vacillation in matters of principle.

B. CAN A NEWSPAPER BE A COLLECTIVE ORGANISER?

The quintessence of the article "Where To Begin" consists in the fact that it discusses *precisely* this question and gives an affirmative reply to it. As far as we know, the only attempt to examine this question on its merits and to prove that it

must be answered in the negative was made by L. Nadezhdin, whose argument we reproduce in full:

"... It pleased us greatly to see *Iskra* (No. 4) present the question of the need for an All-Russian newspaper; but we cannot agree that this presentation bears relevance to the title 'Where To Begin'. Undoubtedly this is an extremely important matter, but neither a newspaper, nor a series of popular leaflets, nor a mountain of manifestoes, can serve as the basis for a militant organisation in revolutionary times. We must set to work to build strong political organisations in the localities. We lack such organisations; we have been carrying on our work mainly among enlightened workers, while the masses have been engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle. *If strong political organisations are not trained locally, what significance will even an excellently organised All-Russian newspaper have?* It will be a burning bush, burning without being consumed, but firing no one! *Iskra* thinks that around it and in the activities in its behalf people will gather and organise. *But they will find it far easier to gather and organise around activities that are more concrete.* This something more concrete must and should be the extensive organisation of local newspapers, the immediate preparation of the workers' forces for demonstrations, the constant activity of local organisations among the unemployed (indefatigable distribution of pamphlets and leaflets, convening of meetings, appeals to actions of protest against the government, etc.). We must begin live political work in the localities, and when the time comes to unite on this real basis, it will not be an artificial, paper unity; not by means of newspapers can such a unification of local work into an All-Russian cause be achieved!" (*The Eve of the Revolution*, p. 54.)

We have emphasised the passages in this eloquent tirade that most clearly show the author's incorrect judgement of our plan, as well as the incorrectness of his point of view in general, which is here contraposed to that of *Iskra*. Unless we train strong political organisations in the localities, even an excellently organised All-Russian newspaper will be of no avail. This is incontrovertible. But the whole point is that *there is no other way* of *training* strong political organisations except through the medium of an All-Russian newspaper. The author missed the most important statement *Iskra* made *before it proceeded* to set forth its "plan": that it was necessary "to call for the formation of a revolutionary organisation, capable of uniting all forces and guiding the movement in actual practice and *not in name alone*, that is, *an organisation ready at any time to support every protest and every outbreak* and use it to build up and consolidate the fighting forces suitable for the decisive struggle". But

now after the February and March events, everyone will agree with this in principle, continues *Iskra*. Yet what we need is not a solution of the question in principle, but its *practical solution*; we must immediately advance a definite constructive plan through which all may immediately set to work to build *from every side*. Now we are again being dragged away from the practical solution towards something which in principle is correct, indisputable, and great, but which is entirely inadequate and incomprehensible to the broad masses of workers, namely, "to rear strong political organisations"! This is not the point at issue, most worthy author. The point is *how* to go about the rearing and how to accomplish it.

It is not true to say that "we have been carrying on our work mainly among enlightened workers, while the masses have been engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle". Presented in such a form, the thesis reduces itself to *Svoboda*'s usual but fundamentally false contraposition of the enlightened workers to the "masses". In recent years, even the enlightened workers have been "engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle". That is the first point. On the other hand, the masses will never learn to conduct the political struggle until we help *to train* leaders for this struggle, both from among the enlightened workers and from among the intellectuals. Such leaders can acquire training *solely* by systematically evaluating *all* the everyday aspects of our political life, *all attempts* at protest and struggle on the part of the various classes and on various grounds. Therefore, to talk of "rearing political organisations" and at the same time *to contrast* the "paper work" of a political newspaper to "live political work in the localities" is plainly ridiculous. *Iskra* has adapted its "plan" for a newspaper to the "plan" for creating a "militant preparedness" to support the unemployed movement, peasant revolts, discontent among the Zemstvo people, "popular indignation against some tsarist bashi-bazouk on the rampage", etc. Anyone who is at all acquainted with the movement knows full well that the vast majority of local organisations have *never even dreamed* of these things; that many of the prospects of "live political work" here indicated *have never* been realised by a single organisation; that the attempt, for example, to call

attention to the growth of discontent and protest among the Zemstvo intelligentsia rouses feelings of consternation and perplexity in Nadezhdin ("Good Lord, is this newspaper intended for Zemstvo people?"—*The Eve*, p. 129), among the Economists (Letter to *Iskra*, No. 12), and among many practical workers. Under these circumstances, it is possible to "begin" *only* by inducing people *to think* about all these things, to summarise and generalise all the diverse signs of ferment and active struggle. In our time, when Social-Democratic tasks are being degraded, *the only way* "live political work" can be *begun* is with live political agitation, which is impossible unless we have an All-Russian newspaper, frequently issued and regularly distributed.

Those who regard the *Iskra* "plan" as a manifestation of "bookishness" have totally failed to understand its substance and take for the goal that which is suggested as the most suitable means for the present time. These people have not taken the trouble to study the two comparisons that were drawn to present a clear illustration of the plan. *Iskra* wrote: The publication of an All-Russian political newspaper must be *the main line* by which we may unswervingly develop, deepen, and expand the organisation (viz., the revolutionary organisation that is ever ready to support every protest and every outbreak). Pray tell me, when bricklayers lay bricks in various parts of an enormous, unprecedentedly large structure, is it "paper" work to use a line to help them find the correct place for the bricklaying; to indicate to them the ultimate goal of the common work; to enable them to use, not only every brick, but even every piece of brick which, cemented to the bricks laid before and after it, forms a finished, continuous line? And are we not now passing through precisely such a period in our Party life when we have bricks and bricklayers, but lack the guide line for all to see and follow? Let them shout that in stretching out the line, we want to command. Had we desired to command, gentlemen, we would have written on the title page, not "*Iskra*, No. 1", but "*Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 3", as we were invited to do by certain comrades, and *as we would have had a perfect right to do* after the events described above. But we did not do that. We wished to have our hands free to wage an irreconcilable struggle against all pseudo-Social-Democrats; we wanted our

line, if properly laid, to be respected because it was correct, and not because it had been laid by an official organ.

"The question of uniting local activity in central bodies runs in a vicious circle," Nadezhdin lectures us; "unification requires homogeneity of the elements, and the homogeneity can be created only by something that unites; but the unifying element may be the product of strong local organisations which at the present time are by no means distinguished for their homogeneity." This truth is as revered and as irrefutable as that we must train strong political organisations. And it is equally barren. *Every* question "runs in a vicious circle" because political life as a whole is an endless chain consisting of an infinite number of links. The whole art of politics lies in finding and taking as firm a grip as we can of the link that is least likely to be struck from our hands, the one that is most important at the given moment, the one that most of all guarantees its possessor the possession of the whole chain.* If we had a crew of experienced bricklayers who had learned to work so well together that they could lay their bricks exactly as required without a guide line (which, speaking abstractly, is by no means impossible), then perhaps we might take hold of some other link. But it is unfortunate that as yet we have no experienced bricklayers trained for teamwork, that bricks are often laid where they are not needed at all, that they are not laid according to the general line, but are so scattered that the enemy can shatter the structure as if it were made of sand and not of bricks.

Another comparison: "A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In this respect *it may be compared to the scaffolding* erected round a building under construction; it marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, permitting them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their

* Comrade Krichevsky and Comrade Martynov! I call your attention to this outrageous manifestation of "autocracy", "uncontrolled authority", "supreme regulating", etc. Just think of it: a desire *to possess* the whole chain!! Send in a complaint at once. Here you have a ready-made topic for two leading articles for No. 12 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*!

organised labour."* Does this sound anything like the attempt of an armchair author to exaggerate his role? The scaffolding is not required at all for the dwelling; it is made of cheaper material, is put up only temporarily, and is scrapped for firewood as soon as the shell of the structure is completed. As for the building of revolutionary organisations, experience shows that sometimes they may be built without scaffolding, as the seventies showed. But at the present time we cannot even imagine the possibility of erecting the building we require without scaffolding.

Nadezhdin disagrees with this, saying: "*Iskra* thinks that around it and in the activities in its behalf people will gather and organise. *But they will find it far easier* to gather and organise around *activities that are more concrete*!" Indeed, "far easier around activities that are more concrete". A Russian proverb holds: "Don't spit into a well, you may want to drink from it." But there are people who do not object to drinking from a well that has been spat into. What despicable things our magnificent, legal "Critics of Marxism" and illegal admirers of *Rabochaya Mysl* have said in the name of this something more concrete! How restricted our movement is by our own narrowness, lack of initiative, and hesitation, which are justified with the traditional argument about finding it "far easier to gather around something more concrete"! And Nadezhdin—who regards himself as possessing a particularly keen sense of the "realities of life", who so severely condemns "armchair" authors and (with pretensions to wit) accuses *Iskra* of a weakness for seeing Economism everywhere, and who sees himself standing far above the division between the orthodox and the Critics—fails to see that with his arguments he contributes to the narrowness that arouses his indignation and that he is drinking from the most spat-in well! The sincerest indignation against narrowness, the most passionate desire to raise its worshippers from their knees, will not suffice if the indignant one is swept along without sail or rudder and, as "spontaneously" as the revolutionaries of the seventies, clutches at such things as "excitative

* Martynov, in quoting the first sentence of this passage in *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10, p. 62), omitted the second, as if desiring to emphasise either his unwillingness to discuss the essentials of the question or his inability to understand them.

terror", "agrarian terror", "sounding the tocsin", etc. Let us take a glance at these "more concrete" activities around which he thinks it will be "far easier" to gather and organise: (1) local newspapers; (2) preparations for demonstrations; (3) work among the unemployed. It is immediately apparent that all these things have been seized upon at random as a pretext for saying something; for, however we may regard them, it would be absurd to see in them anything especially suitable for "gathering and organising". The self-same Nadezhdin says a few pages further: "It is time we simply stated the fact that activity of a very pitiable kind is being carried on in the localities, the committees are not doing a tenth of what they could do ... the coordinating centres we have at present are the purest fiction, representing a sort of revolutionary bureaucracy, whose members mutually grant generalships to one another; and so it will continue until strong local organisations grow up." These remarks, though exaggerating the position somewhat, no doubt contain many a bitter truth; but can it be said that Nadezhdin does not perceive the connection between the pitiable activity in the localities and the narrow mental outlook of the functionaries, the narrow scope of their activities, inevitable in the circumstances of the lack of training of Party workers confined to local organisations? Has he, like the author of the article on organisation, published in *Svoboda*, forgotten how the transition to a broad local press (from 1898) was accompanied by a strong intensification of Economism and "primitiveness"? Even if a "broad local press" could be established at all satisfactorily (and we have shown this to be impossible, save in very, exceptional cases)—even then the local organs could not "gather and organise" *all* the revolutionary forces for a *general* attack upon the autocracy and for leadership of the *united* struggle. Let us not forget that we are here discussing *only* the "rallying", organising significance of the newspaper, and we could put to Nadezhdin, who defends fragmentation, the question he himself has ironically put: "Have we been left a legacy of 200,000 revolutionary organisers?" Furthermore, "preparations for demonstrations" cannot be *contraposed* to *Iskra*'s plan, for the very reason that this plan includes the organisation of the broadest possible demonstrations *as one of its aims*; the point under discussion is

the selection of the practical *means*. On this point also Nadezhdin is confused, for he has lost sight of the fact that only forces that are "gathered and organised" can "prepare for" demonstrations (which hitherto, in the overwhelming majority of cases, have taken place spontaneously) and that we *lack* precisely *the ability* to rally and organise. "Work among the unemployed." Again the same confusion; for this too represents one of the field operations of the mobilised forces and not a plan for mobilising the forces. The extent to which Nadezhdin here too underestimates the harm caused by our fragmentation, by our lack of "200,000 organisers", can be seen from the fact that: many people (including Nadezhdin) have reproached *Iskra* for the paucity of the news it gives on unemployment and for the casual nature of the correspondence it publishes about the most common affairs of rural life. The reproach is justified; but *Iskra* is "guilty without sin". We strive "to stretch a line" through the countryside too, where there are hardly any bricklayers anywhere, and we are *obliged* to encourage *everyone* who informs us even as regards the most common facts, in the hope that this will increase the number of our contributors in the given field and will ultimately *train us all* to select facts that are really the most outstanding. But the material on which we can train is so scanty that, unless we generalise it for the whole of Russia, we shall have very little to train on at all. No doubt, one with at least as much ability as an agitator and as much knowledge of the life of the vagrant as Nadezhdin manifests could render priceless service to the movement by carrying on agitation among the unemployed; but such a person would be simply hiding his light under a bushel if he failed to inform *all* comrades in Russia as regards every step he took in his work, so that others, who, in the mass, still lack the ability to undertake new kinds of work, might learn from his example.

All without exception now talk of the importance of unity, of the necessity for "gathering and organising"; but in the majority of cases what is lacking is a definite idea of where to begin and how to bring about this unity. Probably all will agree that if we "unite", say, the district circles in a given town, it will be necessary to have for this purpose *common institutions*, i.e., not merely the common title of

"League", but genuinely *common* work, exchange of material, experience, and forces, distribution of functions, not only by districts, but through specialisation on a town-wide scale. All will agree that a big secret apparatus will not pay its way (to use a commercial expression) "with the resources" (in both money and manpower, of course) of a single district, and that this narrow field will not provide sufficient scope for a specialist to develop his talents. But the same thing applies to the co-ordination of activities of a number of towns, since even a specific locality *will be* and, in the history of our Social-Democratic movement, has proved to be, far too narrow a field; we have demonstrated this above in detail with regard to political agitation and organisational work. What we require foremost and imperatively is to broaden the field, establish *real* contacts between the towns on the basis of *regular*, *common* work; for fragmentation weighs down on the people and they are "stuck in a hole" (to use the expression employed by a correspondent to *Iskra*), not knowing what is happening in the world, from whom to learn, or how to acquire experience and satisfy their desire to engage in broad activities. I continue to insist that we can *start* establishing *real* contacts only with the aid of a common newspaper, as the only regular, All-Russian enterprise, one which will summarise the results of the most diverse forms of activity and thereby *stimulate* people to march forward untiringly along *all* the innumerable paths leading to revolution, in the same way as all roads lead to Rome. If we do not want unity in name only, we must arrange for all local study circles *immediately to assign*, say, a fourth of their forces to *active* work for the *common* cause, and the newspaper will immediately convey to them* the general design, scope, and character of the cause; it will give them a precise indication of the most keenly felt shortcomings in the All-Russian activity, where agitation is lacking and contacts are weak, and it will point out which little wheels in the vast general mechanism

* *A reservation*: that is, if a given study circle sympathises with the policy of the newspaper and considers it useful to become a collaborator, meaning by that, not only for literary collaboration, but for revolutionary collaboration generally. *Note for Rabocheye Dyelo*: Among revolutionaries who attach value to the cause and not to playing at democracy, who do not separate "sympathy" from the most active and lively participation, this reservation is taken for granted.

a given study circle might repair or replace with better ones. A study circle that has not yet begun to work, but which is only just seeking activity, could then start, not like a craftsman in an isolated little workshop unaware of the earlier development in "industry" or of the general level of production methods prevailing in industry, but as a participant in an extensive enterprise that *reflects* the whole general revolutionary attack on the autocracy. The more perfect the finish of each little wheel and the larger the number of detail workers engaged in the common cause, the closer will our network become and the less will be the disorder in the ranks consequent on inevitable police raids.

The mere function of distributing a newspaper would help to establish *actual* contacts (if it is a newspaper worthy of the name, i.e., if it is issued regularly, not once a month like a magazine, but at least four times a month). At the present time, communication between towns on revolutionary business is an extreme rarity, and, at all events, is the exception rather than the rule. If we had a newspaper, however, such communication would become the rule and would secure, not only the distribution of the newspaper, of course, but (what is more important) an exchange of experience, of material, of forces, and of resources. Organisational work would immediately acquire much greater scope, and the success of one locality would serve as a standing encouragement to further perfection; it would arouse the desire to utilise the experience gained by comrades working in other parts of the country. Local work would become far richer and more varied than it is at present. Political and economic exposures gathered from all over Russia would provide mental food for workers of all trades and *all stages of development*; they would provide material and occasion for talks and readings on the most diverse subjects, which would, in addition, be suggested by hints in the legal press, by talk among the people, and by "shamefaced" government statements. Every outbreak, every demonstration, would be weighed and discussed in its every aspect in all parts of Russia and would thus stimulate a desire to keep up with, and even surpass, the others (we socialists do not by any means flatly reject all emulation or all "competition"!) and consciously prepare that which at first, as it were, sprang up spontaneously,

a desire to take advantage of the favourable conditions in a given district or at a given moment for modifying the plan of attack, etc. At the same time, this revival of local work would obviate that desperate, "convulsive" exertion of *all* efforts and risking of *all* forces which every single demonstration or the publication of every single issue of a local newspaper now frequently entails. On the one hand, the police would find it much more difficult to get at the "roots", if they did not know in what district to dig down for them. On the other hand, regular common work would train our people to adjust the force of a *given* attack to the strength of the given contingent of the common army (at the present time hardly anyone ever thinks of doing that, because in nine cases out of ten these attacks occur spontaneously); such regular common work would facilitate the "transportation" from one place to another, not only of literature, but also of revolutionary forces.

In a great many cases these forces are now being bled white on restricted local work, but under the circumstances we are discussing it would be possible to transfer a capable agitator or organiser from one end of the country to the other, and the occasion for doing this would constantly arise. Beginning with short journeys on Party business at the Party's expense, the comrades would become accustomed to being maintained by the Party, to becoming professional revolutionaries, and to training themselves as real political leaders.

And if indeed we succeeded in reaching the point when all, or at least a considerable majority, of the local committees, local groups, and study circles took up active work for the common cause, we could, in the not distant future, establish a weekly newspaper for regular distribution in tens of thousands of copies throughout Russia. This newspaper would become part of an enormous pair of smith's bellows that would fan every spark of the class struggle and of popular indignation into a general conflagration. Around what is in itself still a very innocuous and very small, but regular and *common*, effort, in the full sense of the word, a regular army of tried fighters would systematically gather and receive their training. On the ladders and scaffolding of this general organisational structure there would soon develop and come

to the fore Social-Democratic Zhelyabovs from among our revolutionaries and Russian Bebels from among our workers, who would take their place at the head of the mobilised army and rouse the whole people to settle accounts with the shame and the curse of Russia.

That is what we should dream of!

* * *

"We should dream!" I wrote these words and became alarmed. I imagined myself sitting at a "unity conference" and opposite me were the *Rabocheye Dyelo* editors and contributors. Comrade Martynov rises and, turning to me, says sternly: "Permit me to ask you, has an autonomous editorial board the right to dream without first soliciting the opinion of the Party committees?" He is followed by Comrade Krichevsky, who (philosophically deepening Comrade Martynov, who long ago rendered Comrade Plekhanov more profound) continues even more sternly: "I go further. I ask, has a Marxist any right at all to dream, knowing that according to Marx, mankind always sets itself the tasks it can solve and that tactics is a process of the growth of Party tasks which grow together with the Party?"

The very thought of these stern questions sends a cold shiver down my spine and makes me wish for nothing but a place to hide in. I shall try to hide behind the back of Pisarev.

"There are rifts and rifts," wrote Pisarev of the rift between dreams and reality. "My dream may run ahead of the natural march of events or may fly off at a tangent in a direction in which no natural march of events will ever proceed. In the first case my dream will not cause any harm; it may even support and augment the energy of the working men.... There is nothing in such dreams that would distort or paralyse labour-power. On the contrary, if man were completely deprived of the ability to dream in this way, if he could not from time to time run ahead and mentally conceive, in an entire and completed picture, the product to which his hands are only just beginning to lend shape, then I cannot at all imagine what stimulus there would be to induce man to undertake and complete extensive and strenuous work in the

sphere of art, science, and practical endeavour.... The rift between dreams and reality causes no harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he attentively observes life, compares his observations with his castles in the air, and if, generally speaking, he works conscientiously for the achievement of his fantasies. If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is well."[188]

Of this kind of dreaming there is unfortunately too little in our movement. And the people most responsible for this are those who boast of their sober views, their "closeness" to the "concrete", the representatives of legal criticism and of illegal "tail-ism".

C. WHAT TYPE OF ORGANISATION DO WE REQUIRE?

From what has been said the reader will see that our "tactics-as-plan" consists in rejecting an immediate *call* for assault; in demanding "to lay effective siege to the enemy fortress"; or, in other words, in demanding that all efforts be directed towards gathering, organising, and *mobilising* a permanent army. When we ridiculed *Rabocheye Dyelo* for its leap from Economism to shouting for an assault (for which it clamoured in *April* 1901, in "*Listok*" *Rabochevo Dyela*, No. 6), it of course came down on us with accusations of being "doctrinaire", of failing to understand our revolutionary duty, of calling for caution, etc. Of course, we were not in the least surprised to hear these accusations from those who totally lack principles and who evade all arguments by references to a profound "tactics-as-process", any more than we were surprised by the fact that these charges were repeated by Nadezhdin, who in general has a supreme contempt for durable programmes and the fundamentals of tactics.

It is said that history does not repeat itself. But Nadezhdin exerts every effort to cause it to repeat itself and he zealously imitates Tkachov[189] in strongly condemning "revolutionary culturism", in shouting about "sounding the tocsin" and about a special "eve-of-the-revolution point of view", etc. Apparently, he has forgotten the well-known maxim that while an original historical event represents a tragedy, its replica is merely a farce.[190] The attempt to seize power, which was prepared by the preaching of Tkachov and carried

out by means of the "terrifying" terror that did really terrify, had grandeur, but the "excitative" terror of a Tkachov the Little is simply ludicrous, particularly so when it is supplemented with the idea of an organisation of average people.

"If *Iskra* would only emerge from its sphere of bookishness," wrote Nadezhdin, "it would realise that these [instances like the worker's letter to *Iskra*, No. 7, etc.] are symptoms of the fact that soon, very soon, the 'assault' will begin, and to speak now [*sic*!] of an organisation linked with an All-Russian newspaper means to propagate armchair ideas and armchair activity." What an unimaginable muddle—on the one hand, excitative terror and an "organisation of average people", along with the opinion that it is far "easier" to gather around something "more concrete", like a local newspaper, and, on the other, the view that to talk "now" about an All-Russian organisation means to propagate armchair thoughts, or, bluntly put, "now" it is already too late! But what of the "extensive organisation of local newspapers"—is it not too late for that, my dear L. Nadezhdin? And compare with this *Iskra*'s point of view and tactical line: excitative terror is nonsense; to talk of an organisation of average people and of the *extensive* publication of local newspapers means to fling the door wide open to Economism. We must speak of a single All-Russian organisation of revolutionaries, and it will never be too late to talk of that until the real, not a paper, assault begins.

"Yes, as far as organisation is concerned the situation is anything but brilliant," continues Nadezhdin. "Yes, *Iskra* is entirely right in saying that the mass of our fighting forces consists of volunteers and insurgents.... You do well to give such a sober picture of the state of our forces. But why, at the same time, do you forget that *the masses are not ours at all*, and consequently, *will not ask us* when to begin military operations; they will simply go and 'rebel'.... When the crowd itself breaks out with its elemental destructive force it *may* overwhelm and sweep aside the 'regular troops' among whom we prepared all the time to introduce extremely systematic organisation, but never *managed* to do so." (Our italics.)

Astounding logic! *For the very reason* that the "masses are not ours" it is stupid and unseemly to shout about an immediate "assault", for assault means attack by regular troops and not a spontaneous mass upsurge. For the very reason that the masses *may* overwhelm and sweep aside the regular

troops we must without fail "manage to keep up" with the spontaneous upsurge by our work of "introducing extremely systematic organisation" in the regular troops, for the more we "manage" to introduce such organisation the more probably will the regular troops not be overwhelmed by the masses, but will take their place at their head. Nadezhdin is confused because he imagines that troops in the course of systematic organisation are engaged in something that isolates them from the masses, when in actuality they are engaged exclusively in all-sided and all-embracing political agitation, i.e., precisely in work that *brings closer and merges into a single whole* the elemental destructive force of the masses and the conscious destructive force of the organisation of revolutionaries. You, gentlemen, wish to lay the blame where it does not belong. For it is precisely the *Svoboda* group that, by including terror *in its programme*, calls for an organisation of terrorists, and such an organisation would indeed prevent our troops from establishing closer contacts with the masses, which, unfortunately, are still not ours, and which, unfortunately, do not yet ask us, or rarely ask us, when and how to launch their military operations.

"We shall miss the revolution itself," continues Nadezhdin in his attempt to scare *Iskra*, "in the same way as we missed the recent events, which came upon us like a bolt from the blue." This sentence, taken in connection with what has been quoted above, clearly demonstrates the absurdity of the "eve-of-the-revolution point of view" invented by *Svoboda*.* Plainly put, this special "point of view" boils down to this that it is too late "now" to discuss and prepare. If that is the case, most worthy opponent of "bookishness", what was the use of writing a pamphlet of 132 pages on questions of theory**

---

* *The Eve of the Revolution*, p. 62.

** In his *Review of Questions of Theory*, Nadezhdin, by the way, made almost no contribution whatever to the discussion of questions of theory, apart, perhaps, from the following passage, a most peculiar one from the "eve-of-the-revolution point of view": "Bernsteinism, on the whole, is losing its acuteness for us at the present moment, as is the question whether Mr. Adamovich will prove that Mr. Struve has already earned a lacing, or, on the contrary, whether Mr. Struve will refute Mr. Adamovich and will refuse to resign—it really makes no difference, because the hour of revolution has struck" (p. 110). One can hardly imagine a more glaring illustration of Nadezhdin's

and tactics"? Don't you think it would have been more becoming for the "eve-of-the-revolution point of view" to have issued 132,000 leaflets containing the summary call, "Bang them—knock'em down!"?

Those who make nation-wide political agitation the cornerstone of their programme, *their tactics*, *and their organisational work*, as *Iskra* does, stand the least risk of missing the revolution. The people who are now engaged throughout Russia in weaving the network of connections that spread from the All-Russian newspaper not only did not miss the spring events, but, on the contrary, gave us an opportunity to foretell them. Nor did they miss the demonstrations that were described in *Iskra*, Nos. 13 and 14; on the contrary, they took part in them, clearly realising that it was their duty to come to the aid of the spontaneously rising masses and, at the same time, through the medium of the newspaper, help all the comrades in Russia to inform themselves of the demonstrations and to make use of their gathered experience. And if they live they will not miss the revolution, which, first and foremost, will demand of us experience in agitation, ability to support (in a Social-Democratic manner) every protest, as well as direct the spontaneous movement, while safeguarding it from the mistakes of friends and the traps of enemies.

We have thus come to the last reason that compels us so strongly to insist on the plan of an organisation centred round an All-Russian newspaper, through the common work for the common newspaper. Only such organisation will ensure the *flexibility* required of a militant Social-Democratic organisation, viz., the ability to adapt itself immediately to the most diverse and rapidly changing conditions of struggle, the ability, "on the one hand, to avoid an open battle against an overwhelming enemy, when the enemy has concentrated all his forces at one spot and yet, on the other, to

---

infinite disregard for theory. We have proclaimed "the eve of the revolution", *therefore* "it really makes no difference" whether or not the orthodox will succeed in finally driving the Critics from their positions! Our wiseacre fails to see that it is precisely during the revolution that we shall stand in need of the results of our theoretical battles with the Critics in order to be able resolutely to combat their *practical* positions!

take advantage of his unwieldiness and to attack him when and where he least expects it".* It would be a grievous error indeed to build the Party organisation in anticipation only of outbreaks and street fighting, or only upon the "forward march of the drab everyday struggle". We must *always* conduct our everyday work and always be prepared for every situation, because very frequently it is almost impossible to foresee when a period of outbreak will give way to a period of calm. In the instances, however, when it is possible to do so, we could not turn this foresight to account for the purpose of reconstructing our organisation; for in an autocratic country these changes take place with astonishing rapidity, being sometimes connected with a single night raid by the tsarist janizaries.[191] And the revolution itself must not by any means be regarded as a single act (as the Nadezhdins apparently imagine), but as a series of more or less powerful outbreaks rapidly alternating with periods of more or less complete calm. For that reason, the principal content of the activity of our Party organisation, the focus of this activity, should be work that is both possible and essential in the period of a most powerful outbreak as well as in the period of complete calm, namely, work of political agitation, connected throughout Russia, illuminating all aspects of life, and conducted among the broadest possible strata of the masses. But this work is *unthinkable* in present-day Russia without an All-Russian newspaper, issued very frequently. The organisation, which will form round this newspaper, the organisation of its *collaborators* (in the broad sense of the word, i.e., all those working for it), will be ready *for*

* *Iskra*, No. 4, "Where To Begin". "Revolutionary culturists, who do not accept the eve-of-the-revolution point of view, are not in the least perturbed by the prospect of working for a long period of time," writes Nadezhdin (p. 62). This brings us to observe: Unless we are able to devise political tactics and an organisational plan for *work over a very long period*, while ensuring, in *the very process of this work*, our Party's readiness to be at its post and fulfil its duty in every contingency whenever the march of events is accelerated—unless we succeed in doing this, we shall prove to be but miserable political adventurers. Only Nadezhdin, who began but yesterday to describe himself as a Social-Democrat, can forget that the aim of Social-Democracy is to transform radically the conditions of life of the whole of mankind and that for this reason it is not permissible for a Social-Democrat to be "perturbed" by the question of the duration of the work.

everything, from upholding the honour, the prestige, and the continuity of the Party in periods of acute revolutionary "depression" to preparing for, appointing the time for, and carrying out the *nation-wide armed uprising*.

Indeed, picture to yourselves a very ordinary occurrence in Russia—the total round-up of our comrades in one or several localities. In the absence of a *single*, common, regular activity that combines *all* the local organisations, such round-ups frequently result in the interruption of the work for many months. If, however, all the local organisations had one common activity, then, even in the event of a very serious round-up, two or three energetic persons could in the course of a few weeks establish contact between the common centre and new youth circles, which, as we know, spring up very quickly even now. And when the common activity, hampered by the arrests, is apparent to all, new circles will be able to come into being and make connections with the centre even more rapidly.

On the other hand, picture to yourselves a popular uprising. Probably everyone will now agree that we must think of this and prepare for it. But *how*? Surely the Central Committee cannot appoint agents to all localities for the purpose of preparing the uprising. Even if we had a Central Committee, it could achieve absolutely nothing by such appointments under present-day Russian conditions. But a network of agents* that would form in the course of establishing and distributing the common newspaper would not have to "sit about and wait" for the call for an uprising, but could carry on the regular activity that would guarantee the highest

* Alas, alas! Again I have let slip that awful word "agents", which jars so much on the democratic cars of the Martynovs! I wonder why this word did not offend the heroes of the seventies and yet offends the amateurs of the nineties? I like the word, because it clearly and trenchantly indicates *the common cause* to which all the agents bend their thoughts and actions, and if I had to replace this word by another, the only word I might select would be the word "collaborator", if it did not suggest a certain bookishness and vagueness. The thing we need is a military organisation of agents. However, the numerous Martynovs (particularly abroad), whose favourite pastime is "mutual grants of generalships to one another", may instead of saying "passport agent" prefer to say, "Chief of the Special Department for Supplying Revolutionaries with Passports". etc.

probability of success in the event of an uprising. Such activity would strengthen our contacts with the broadest strata of the working masses and with all social strata that are discontented with the autocracy, which is of such importance for an uprising. Precisely such activity would serve to cultivate the ability to estimate correctly the general political situation and, consequently, the ability to select the proper moment for an uprising. Precisely such activity would train *all* local organisations to respond simultaneously to the same political questions, incidents, and events that agitate the whole of Russia and to react to such "incidents" in the most vigorous, uniform, and expedient manner possible; for an uprising is in essence the most vigorous, most uniform, and most expedient "answer" of the entire people to the government. Lastly, it is precisely such activity that would train all revolutionary organisations throughout Russia to maintain the most continuous, and at the same time the most secret, contacts with one another, thus creating *real* Party unity; for without such contacts it will be impossible collectively to discuss' the plan for the uprising and to take the necessary preparatory measures on the eve, measures that must be kept in the strictest secrecy.

In a word, the "plan for an All-Russian political newspaper", far from representing the fruits of the labour of armchair workers, infected with dogmatism and bookishness (as it seemed to those who gave but little thought to it), is the most practical plan for immediate and all-round preparation of the uprising, with, at the same time, no loss of sight for a moment of the pressing day-to-day work.

CONCLUSION

The history of Russian Social-Democracy can be distinctly divided into three periods:

The first period embraces about ten years, approximately from 1884 to 1894. This was the period of the rise and consolidation of the theory and programme of Social-Democracy. The adherents of the new trend in Russia were very few in number. Social-Democracy existed without a working-class movement, and as a political party it was at the embryonic stage of development.

The second period embraces three or four years—1894-98. In this period Social-Democracy appeared on the scene as a social movement, as the upsurge of the masses of the people, as a political party. This is the period of its childhood and adolescence. The intelligentsia was fired with a vast and general zeal for struggle against Narodism and for going among the workers; the workers displayed a general enthusiasm for strike action. The movement made enormous strides. The majority of the leaders were young people who had not reached "the age of thirty-five" which to Mr. N. Mikhailovsky appeared to be a sort of natural border-line. Owing to their youth, they proved to be untrained for practical work and they left the scene with astonishing rapidity. But in the majority of cases the scope of their activity was very wide. Many of them had begun their revolutionary thinking as adherents of Narodnaya Volya. Nearly all had in their early youth enthusiastically worshipped the terrorist heroes. It required a struggle to abandon the captivating impressions of those heroic traditions, and the struggle was accompanied by the breaking off of personal relations with people who were deter-

mined to remain loyal to the Narodnaya Volya and for whom the young Social-Democrats had profound respect. The struggle compelled the youthful leaders to educate themselves to read illegal literature of every trend, and to study closely the questions of legal Narodism. Trained in this struggle, Social-Democrats went into the working-class movement without "for a moment" forgetting either the theory of Marxism, which brightly illumined their path, or the task of overthrowing the autocracy. The formation of the Party in the spring of 1898 was the most striking and at the same time the *last* act of the Social-Democrats of this period.

The third period, as we have seen, was prepared in 1897 and it definitely cut off the second period in 1898 (1898-?). This was a period of disunity, dissolution, and vacillation. During adolescence a youth's voice breaks. And so, in this period, the voice of Russian Social-Democracy began to break, to strike a false note—on the one hand, in the writings of Messrs. Struve and Prokopovich, of Bulgakov and Berdyaev, and on the other, in those of V. I—n and R. M., of B. Krichevsky and Martynov. But it was only the leaders who wandered about separately and drew back; the movement itself continued to grow, and it advanced with enormous strides. The proletarian struggle spread to new strata of the workers and extended to the whole of Russia, at the same time indirectly stimulating the revival of the democratic spirit among the students and among other sections of the population. The political consciousness of the leaders, however, capitulated before the breadth and power of the spontaneous upsurge; among the Social-Democrats, another type had become dominant—the type of functionaries, trained almost exclusively on "legal Marxist" literature, which proved to be all the more inadequate the more the spontaneity of the masses demanded political consciousness on the part of the leaders. The leaders not only lagged behind in regard to theory ("freedom of criticism") and practice ("primitiveness"), but they sought to justify their backwardness by all manner of high-flown arguments. Social-Democracy was degraded to the level of trade-unionism by the Brentano adherents in legal literature, and by the tail-enders in illegal literature. The *Credo* programme began to be put into operation, espe-

cially when the "primitive methods" of the Social-Democrats caused a revival of revolutionary non-Social-Democratic tendencies.

If the reader should feel critical that I have dealt at too great length with a certain *Rabocheye Dyelo*, I can say only that *Rabocheye Dyelo* acquired "historical" significance because it most notably reflected the "spirit" of this third period.* It was not the consistent R. M., but the weathercock Krichevskys and Martynovs who were able properly to express the disunity and vacillation, the readiness to make concessions to "criticism" to "Economism", and to terrorism. Not the lofty contempt for practical work displayed by some worshipper of the "absolute" is characteristic of this period, but the combination of pettifogging practice and utter disregard for theory. It was not so much in the direct rejection of "grandiose phrases" that the heroes of this period engaged as in their vulgarisation. Scientific socialism ceased to be an integral revolutionary theory and became a hodgepodge "freely" diluted with the content of every new German textbook that appeared; the slogan "class struggle" did not impel to broader and more energetic activity but served as a balm, since "the economic struggle is inseparably linked with the political struggle"; the idea of a party did not serve as a call for the creation of a militant organisation of revolutionaries, but was used to justify some sort of "revolutionary bureaucracy" and infantile playing at "democratic" forms.

When the third period will come to an end and the fourth (now heralded by many portents) will begin we do not know. We are passing from the sphere of history to the sphere of the present and, partly, of the future. But we firmly believe that the fourth period will lead to the consolidation of militant Marxism, that Russian Social-Democracy will emerge from the crisis in the full flower of manhood, that the oppor-

---

* I could also reply with the German proverb: *Den Sack schlägt man, den Esel meint man* (you beat the sack, but you mean the donkey). Not *Rabocheye Dyelo* alone, but also *the broad mass* of practical workers *and theoreticians* was carried away by the "criticism" *à la mode*, becoming confused in regard to the question of spontaneity and lapsing from the Social-Democratic to the trade-unionist conception of our political and organisational tasks.

tunist rearguard will be "replaced" by the genuine vanguard of the most revolutionary class.

In the sense of calling for such a "replacement" and by way of summing up what has been expounded above, we may meet the question, What is to be done? with the brief reply:

Put an End to the Third Period.

FROM MARX
TO MAO

NOT FOR
COMMERCIAL
DISTRIBUTION

Appendix[192]

THE ATTEMPT TO UNITE *ISKRA* WITH *RABOCHEYE DYELO*

It remains for us to describe the tactics adopted and consistently pursued by *Iskra* in its organisational relations with *Rabocheye Dyelo*. These tactics were fully expressed in *Iskra*, No. 1, in the article entitled "The Split in the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad".* From the outset we adopted the point of view that the real Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, which at the First Congress of our Party was recognised as its representative abroad, had split into two organisations; that the question of the Party's representation remained an open one, having been settled only temporarily and conditionally by the election, at the International Congress in Paris, of two members to represent Russia on the International Socialist Bureau,[193] one from each of the two sections of the divided Union Abroad. We declared that fundamentally *Rabocheye Dyelo* was wrong; in principle we emphatically took the side of the Emancipation of Labour group, at the same time refusing to enter into the details of the split and noting the services rendered by the Union Abroad in the sphere of purely practical work.**

Consequently, ours was, to a certain extent, a waiting policy. We made a concession to the opinions prevailing among the majority of the Russian Social-Democrats that the most determined opponents of Economism could work

---

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 378-79.—*Ed.*

** Our judgement of the split was based, not only upon a study of the literature on the subject, but also on information gathered abroad by several members of our organisation.

hand in hand with the Union Abroad because it had repeatedly declared its agreement in principle with the Emancipation of Labour group, without, allegedly, taking an independent position on fundamental questions of theory and tactics. The correctness of our position was indirectly proved by the fact that almost simultaneously with the appearance of the first issue of *Iskra* (December 1900) three members separated from the Union, formed the so-called "Initiators' Group", and offered their services: (1) to the foreign section of the *Iskra* organisation, (2) to the revolutionary *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation, and (3) to the Union Abroad, as mediators in negotiations for reconciliation. The first two organisations at once announced their agreement; *the third turned down* the offer. True, when a speaker related these facts at the "Unity" Conference last year, a member of the Administrative Committee of the Union Abroad declared the rejection of the offer to have been due *entirely* to the fact that the Union Abroad was dissatisfied with the composition of the Initiators' Group. While I consider it my duty to cite this explanation, I cannot, however, refrain from observing that it is an unsatisfactory one; for, knowing that two organisations had agreed to enter into negotiations, the Union Abroad could have approached them through another intermediary or directly.

In the spring of 1901 both *Zarya* (No. 1, April) and *Iskra* (No. 4, May)* entered into open polemics with *Rabocheye Dyelo*. *Iskra* particularly attacked the article "A Historic Turn" in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, which, in its *April* supplement, that is, after the spring events, revealed instability on the question of terror and the calls for "blood", with which many had been carried away at the time. Notwithstanding the polemics, the Union Abroad agreed to resume negotiations for reconciliation through the instrumentality of a new group of "conciliators". A preliminary conference of representatives of the three cited organisations, held in June, framed a draft agreement on the basis of a very detailed "accord on principles", which the Union Abroad published in the pamphlet *Two Conferences*, and the League Abroad in the pamphlet *Documents of the "Unity" Conference*.

---

* See present volume, pp. 13-24.—*Ed.*

The contents of this accord on principles (more frequently named the Resolutions of the June Conference) make it perfectly clear that we put forward as an absolute condition for unity *the most emphatic* repudiation of any and every manifestation of opportunism generally, and of Russian opportunism in particular. Paragraph 1 reads: "We repudiate all attempts to introduce opportunism into the proletarian class struggle—attempts that have found expression in the so-called Economism, Bernsteinism, Millerandism, etc." "The sphere of Social-Democratic activities includes ... ideological struggle against all opponents of revolutionary Marxism" (4, c); "In every sphere of organisational and agitational activity Social-Democracy must never for a moment forget that the immediate task of the Russian proletariat is the overthrow of the autocracy" (5, a); "... agitation, not only on the basis of the everyday struggle between wage-labour and capital" (5, b); "... we do not recognise ... a stage of purely economic struggle and of struggle for partial political demands" (5, c); "... we consider it important for the movement to criticise tendencies that make a principle of the elementariness and narrowness of the lower forms of the movement" (5, d). Even a complete outsider, having read these resolutions at all attentively, will have realised from their very formulations that they are directed against people who were opportunists and Economists, who, even for a moment, forgot the task of overthrowing the autocracy, who recognised the theory of stages, who elevated narrowness to a principle, etc. Anyone who has the least acquaintance with the polemics conducted by the Emancipation of Labour group, *Zarya*, and *Iskra* against *Rabocheye Dyelo* cannot doubt for a single moment that these resolutions repudiate, point by point, the very errors into which *Rabocheye Dyelo* strayed. Hence, when a member of the Union Abroad declared at the "Unity" Conference that the articles in No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo* had been prompted, not by a new "historic turn" on the part of the Union Abroad, but by the excessive "abstractness" of the resolution,* the assertion was justly ridiculed by one of the speakers. Far from being abstract, he said, the resolutions were incredibly concrete: one could see at a glance that they were "trying to catch somebody".

* This assertion is repeated in *Two Conferences*, p. 25.

This remark occasioned a characteristic incident at the Conference. On the one hand, Krichevsky, seizing upon the word "catch" in the belief that this was a slip of the tongue which betrayed our evil intentions ("to set a trap"), pathetically exclaimed: "Whom are they out to catch?" "Whom indeed?" rejoined Plekhanov sarcastically. "Let me come to the aid of Comrade Plekhanov's lack of perspicacity," replied Krichevsky. "Let me explain to him that the trap was set *for the Editorial Board of Rabocheye Dyelo* [general laughter] but we have not allowed ourselves to be caught!" (A remark from the left: "All the worse for you!") On the other hand, a member of the Borba group (a group of conciliators), opposing the amendments of the Union Abroad to the resolutions and desiring to defend our speaker, declared that obviously the word "catch" was dropped by chance in the heat of polemics.

For my part, I think the speaker responsible for uttering the word will hardly be pleased with this "defence". I think the words "trying to catch somebody" were "true words spoken in jest"; we have always accused *Rabocheye Dyelo* of instability and vacillation, and, naturally, we *had* to try *to catch* it in order to put a stop to the vacillation. There is not the slightest suggestion of evil intent in this, for we were discussing instability of principles And we succeeded in "catching" the Union Abroad in such comradely manner* that Krichevsky himself and one other member of the Administrative Committee of the Union signed the June resolutions.

The articles in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10 (our comrades saw the issue for the first time when they arrived at the Confer-

* Precisely: In the introduction to the June resolutions we said that Russian Social-Democracy as a whole always stood by the principles of the Emancipation of Labour group and that the particular service of the Union Abroad was its publishing and organising activity. In other words, we expressed our complete readiness to forget, the past and to recognise the usefulness (for the cause) of the work of our comrades of the Union Abroad *provided* it completely ceased the vacillation we tried to "catch". Any impartial person reading the June resolutions will only thus interpret them. If the Union Abroad, after having *caused* a split by its new turn towards Economism (in its articles in No. 10 and in the amendments), now solemnly charges us with *untruth* (*Two Conferences*, p. 30), because of what we said about its services, then, of course, such an accusation can only evoke a smile.

ence, a few days before the meetings started) clearly showed that a new turn had taken place in the Union Abroad in the period between the summer and the autumn: the Economists had once more gained the upper hand, and the Editorial Board, which veered with every "wind", again set out to defend "the most pronounced Bernsteinians" and "freedom of criticism", to defend "spontaneity", and through the lips of Martynov to preach the "theory of restricting" the sphere of our political influence (for the alleged purpose of rendering this influence more complex). Once again Parvus' apt observation that it is difficult to catch an opportunist with a formula has been proved correct. An opportunist will readily put his name to *any* formula and as readily abandon it, because opportunism means precisely a lack of definite and firm principles. Today, the opportunists have repudiated *all* attempts to introduce opportunism, repudiated *all* narrowness, solemnly promised "never for a moment to forget about the task of overthrowing the autocracy" and to carry on "agitation not only on the basis of the everyday struggle between wage-labour and capital", etc., etc. But tomorrow they will change their form of expression and revert to their old tricks on the pretext of defending spontaneity and the forward march of the drab everyday struggle, of extolling demands promising palpable results, etc. By continuing to assert that in the articles in No. 10 "the Union Abroad did not and does not now see any heretical departure from the general principles of the draft adopted at the conference" (*Two Conferences*, p. 26), the Union Abroad merely reveals a complete lack of ability, or of desire, to understand the essential points of the disagreements.

After the tenth issue of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, we could make one effort: open a general discussion in order to ascertain whether all the members of the Union Abroad agreed with the articles and with the Editorial Board. The Union Abroad is particularly displeased with us because of this and accuses us of trying to sow discord in its ranks, of interfering in other people's business, etc. These accusations are obviously unfounded, since with an elected editorial board that "veers" with every wind, however light, everything depends upon the direction of the wind, and we defined the direction at private meetings at which no one was present, except mem-

bers of the organisations intending to unite. The amendments to the June resolutions submitted in the name of the Union Abroad have removed the last shadow of hope of arriving at agreement. The amendments are documentary evidence of the new turn towards Economism and of the fact that the majority of the Union members are in agreement with *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10. It was moved to delete the words "so-called Economism" from the reference to manifestations of opportunism (on the plea that "the meaning" of these words "was vague"; but if that were so, all that was required was a more precise definition of the nature of the widespread error), and to delete "Millerandism" (although Krichevsky had defended it in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 2-3, pp. 83-84, and still more openly in *Vorwärts**). Notwithstanding the fact that the June resolutions definitely indicated that the task of Social-Democracy is "to guide *every* manifestation of the proletarian struggle against *all* forms of political, *economic*, and social oppression", thereby calling for the introduction of system and unity in all these manifestations of the struggle, the Union Abroad added the wholly superfluous words that "the economic struggle is a powerful stimulus to the mass movement" (taken by itself, this assertion cannot be disputed, but with the existence of narrow Economism it could not but give occasion for false interpretations). Moreover, even the direct *constriction* of "politics" was suggested for the June resolutions, both by the deletion of the words "not for a moment" (to forget the aim of overthrowing the autocracy) and by the addition of the words "the economic struggle is the *most widely* applicable means of drawing the masses into active political struggle". Naturally, upon the submission of such amendments, the speakers on our side refused, one after another, to take the floor, considering it hopeless to continue negotiations with people who were again turning towards Economism and were striving to secure for themselves freedom to vacillate.

"It was precisely the preservation of the independent features and the autonomy of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, considered by the Union to be the *sine qua non* of the durability of

* A polemic on the subject started in *Vorwärts* between its present editor, Kautsky, and the Editorial Board of *Zarya*. We shall not fail to acquaint the Russian reader with this controversy.[194]

our future agreement, that *Iskra* regarded as the stumbling-block to agreement" (*Two Conferences*, p. 25). This is most inexact. We never had any designs against *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s autonomy.* We did indeed *absolutely refuse to recognise* the independence of its features, if by "independent features" is meant independence on questions of principle in theory and tactics. The June resolutions contain an utter repudiation of *such* independence of features, because, in practice, such "independence of features" has always meant, as we have pointed out, all manner of vacillations fostering the disunity which prevails among us and which is intolerable from the Party point of view. *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s articles in its tenth issue, together with its "amendments" clearly revealed its desire to preserve this kind of independence of features, and such a desire naturally and inevitably led to a rupture and a declaration of war. But all of us were ready to recognise *Rabocheye Dyelo*'s "independence of features" in the sense that it should concentrate on definite literary functions. A proper distribution of these functions naturally called for: (1) a theoretical magazine, (2) a political newspaper, and (3) popular collections of articles and popular pamphlets. Only by agreeing to such a distribution of functions would *Rabocheye Dyelo* have proved that it *sincerely* desired to abandon once and for all its errors, against which the June resolutions were directed. Only such a distribution of functions would have removed all possibility of friction, effectively guaranteed a durable agreement, and, at the same time, served as a basis for a revival and for new successes of our movement.

At present not a single Russian Social-Democrat can have any doubts that the final rupture between the revolutionary and the opportunist tendencies was caused, not by any "organisational" circumstances, but by the desire of the opportunists to consolidate the independent features of opportunism and to continue to cause confusion of mind by the disquisitions of the Krichevskys and Martynovs.

---

* That is, if the editorial consultations in connection with the establishment of a joint supreme council of the combined organisations are not to be regarded as a restriction of autonomy. But in June *Rabocheye Dyelo* agreed to this.

CORRECTION TO *WHAT IS TO BE DONE?*

The Initiators' Group of whom I speak in the pamphlet *What Is To Be Done?*, p. 141,* have asked me to make the following correction to my description of the part they played in the attempt to reconcile the Social-Democratic organisations abroad: "Of the three members of this group, only one left the Union Abroad at the end of 1900; the others left in 1901, only after becoming convinced that it was impossible to obtain the Union's consent to a conference with the *Iskra* organisation abroad and the revolutionary *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation, which the Initiators' Group had proposed. The Administrative Committee of the Union Abroad at first rejected this proposal, contending that the persons comprising the Initiators' Group were 'not competent' to act as mediators, and it expressed the desire to enter into direct contact with the *Iskra* organisation abroad. Soon thereafter, however, the Administrative Committee of the Union Abroad informed the Initiators' Group that following the appearance of the first number of *Iskra* containing the report of the split in the Union, it had altered its decision and no longer desired to maintain relations with *Iskra*. After this, how can one explain the statement made by a member of the Administrative Committee of the Union Abroad that the latter's rejection of a conference was called forth *entirely* by its dissatisfaction with the composition of the Initiators' Group? It is true that it is equally difficult to explain why the

* See present volume, p. 521-22.—*Ed.*

Administrative Committee of the Union Abroad agreed to a conference in June of last year, for the article in the first issue of *Iskra* still remained in force and *Iskra*'s 'negative' attitude to the Union Abroad was still more strongly expressed in the first issue of *Zarya*, and in No. 4 of *Iskra*, both of which appeared prior to the June Conference."

N. Lenin

Iskra, No. 19, April 1, 1902

Published according to the *Iskra* text

NOTES

[1] "*Where To Begin*" was published in *Iskra* and reissued by local Social-Democratic organisations as a separate pamphlet. The Siberian Social-Democratic League printed 5,000 copies of the pamphlet and distributed it throughout Siberia. The pamphlet was also distributed in Samara, Tambov, Nizhni-Novgorod, and other Russian cities. p. 13

[2] *Rabocheye Dyelo* (*The Workers' Cause*)—a journal with "Economist" views, organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad. It appeared irregularly and was published in Geneva from April 1899 to February 1902 under the editorship of B. N. Krichevsky, A. S. Martynov, and V. P. Ivanshin. Altogether 12 numbers appeared in nine issues.

Lenin criticised the views of the Rabocheye Dyelo group in his *What Is To Be Done?* (see present volume, pp. 347-529). p. 17

[3] "*Listok*" *Rabochevo Dyela* (*Rabocheye Dyelo Supplement*)—of which eight numbers were issued in Geneva, at irregular intervals, between June 1900 and July 1901. p. 17

[4] *Rabochaya Mysl (Workers' Thought)*—an "Economist" newspaper, organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, published from October 1897 to December 1902. Altogether 16 issues appeared: numbers 3 to 11 and number 16 were published in Berlin, the remaining numbers in St. Petersburg. It was edited by K. M. Takhtarev and others.

Lenin characterised the paper's views as a Russian variety of international opportunism and criticised them in a number of his articles published in *Iskra* and in other works including *What Is To Be Done?* p. 17

[5] The reference is to the article "The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement", which was published as the leading article in *Iskra*, No. 1, December 1900 (see present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 366-71).

Iskra (*The Spark*)—the first All-Russian illegal Marxist newspaper, founded by Lenin in 1900. The foundation of a militant organ of revolutionary Marxism was the main task confronting Russian Social-Democrats at the time.

Since the publication of a revolutionary newspaper in Russia was impossible, owing to police persecution, Lenin, while still in exile in Siberia, worked out all the details of a plan to publish

the paper abroad. When his term of exile ended in January 1900, he immediately began to put his plan into effect. In February he conducted negotiations with Vera Zasulich, who had come illegally to St. Petersburg from abroad, on the participation of the Emancipation of Labour group in the publication of an All-Russian Marxist newspaper. The so-called Pskov Conference was held in April, with V. I. Lenin, L. Martov (Y. O. Tsederbaum), A. N. Potresov, S. I. Radchenko, and the "legal Marxists" (P. B. Struve and M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky) participating. The conference heard and discussed Lenin's draft editorial declaration on the programme and the aims of the All-Russian newspaper (*Iskra*) and the scientific and political magazine (*Zarya*). Lenin visited a number of Russian cities—St. Petersburg, Riga, Pskov, Nizhni-Novgorod, Ufa, and Samara—establishing contact with Social-Democratic groups and individual Social-Democrats and obtaining their support for *Iskra*. In August, when Lenin arrived in Switzerland, he and Potresov held a conference with the Emancipation of Labour group on the programme and the aims of the newspaper and the magazine on possible contributors, on the composition of Editorial Board, and on the problem of residence. For an account of the founding of *Iskra* see the article "How the 'Spark' was Nearly Extinguished" (see present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 333-49).

The first issue of Lenin's *Iskra* was published in Leipzig in December 1900; the ensuing issues were published in Munich; from July 1902 it was published in London; and from the spring of 1903 in Geneva.

The Editorial Board consisted of V. I. Lenin, G. V. Plekhanov, L. Martov, P. B. Axelrod, A. N. Potresov, and V. I. Zasulich. The first secretary of the Editorial Board was I. G. Smidovich-Leman. From the spring of 1901 the post was taken over by N. K. Krupskaya, who was also in charge of all correspondence between *Iskra* and Russian Social-Democratic organisations. Lenin was actually Editor-in-Chief and the leading figure in *Iskra*. He published his articles on all important questions of Party organisation and the class struggle of the proletariat in Russia and dealt with the most important events in world affairs.

Iskra became, as Lenin had planned, a rallying centre for the Party forces, a centre for the training of leading Party workers. In a number of Russian cities (St. Petersburg, Moscow Samara, and others) groups and committees of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (R.S.D.L.P.) were organised along Lenin's *Iskra* line. *Iskra* organisations sprang up and worked under the direct leadership of Lenin's disciples and comrades-in-arms: N. E. Bauman, I. V. Babushkin, S. I. Gusev, M. I. Kalinin, G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, and others. The newspaper played a decisive role in the struggle for the Marxist Party, in the defeat of the "Economists", and in the unification of the dispersed Social-Democratic study circles.

On the initiative and with the direct participation of Lenin, the Editorial Board drew up a draft programme of the Party

(published in *Iskra*, No. 21) and prepared the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., which was held in July and August 1903. By the time the Congress was convened the majority of the local Social-Democratic organisations in Russia had joined forces with *Iskra*, approved its programme, organisational plan, and tactical line, and accepted it as their leading organ. By a special resolution, which noted the exceptional role played by *Iskra* in the struggle to build the Party, the Congress adopted the newspaper as the central organ of the R.S.D.L.P. and approved an editorial board consisting of Lenin, Plekhanov, and Martov. Despite the decision of the Congress, Martov refused to participate, and Nos. 46 to 51 were edited by Lenin and Plekhanov. Later Plekhanov went over to the Menshevik position and demanded that all the old Menshevik editors, notwithstanding their rejection by the Congress, be placed on the Editorial Board. Lenin could not agree to this, and on October 19 (November 1, new style), 1903, he left the *Iskra* Editorial Board to strengthen his position in the Central Committee and from there to conduct a struggle against the Menshevik opportunists. Issue No. 52 of *Iskra* was edited by Plekhanov alone. On November 13 (26), 1903, Plekhanov, on his own initiative and in violation of the will of the Congress, co-opted all the old Menshevik editors on to the Editorial Board. Beginning with issue No. 52, the Mensheviks turned *Iskra* into their own, opportunist, organ. p. 18

[6] This passage refers to the mass revolutionary actions of students and workers—political demonstrations, meetings, strikes—that took place in February and March 1901, in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov, Kazan, Yaroslavl, Warsaw, Belostok, Tomsk, Odessa, and other cities in Russia.

The student movement of 1900-01, which began with academic demands, acquired the character of revolutionary action against the reactionary policy of the autocracy; it was supported by the advanced workers and it met with a response among all strata of Russian society. The direct cause of the demonstrations and strikes in February and March 1901, was the drafting of 183 Kiev University students into the army as a punitive act for their participation in a students' meeting (see present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 414-19). The government launched a furious attack on participants in the revolutionary actions; the police and the Cossacks dispersed demonstrations and assaulted the participants; hundreds of students were arrested and expelled from colleges and universities. On March 4 (17), 1901, the demonstration in the square in front of the Kazan Cathedral, in St. Petersburg, was dispersed with particular brutality. The February-March events were evidence of the revolutionary upsurge in Russia; the participation of workers in the movement under political slogans was of tremendous importance. p. 20

[7] The reference is to Lenin's work *What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement* (see present volume, pp. 347-529). p. 20

[8] Lenin refers to a contribution to *Iskra*, No. 5 (June 1901), entitled "The First of May in Russia", which was published in the section "Chronicle of the Working-Class Movement and Letters from Factories". p. 27

[9] Lenin refers to Frederick Engels' Introduction to Karl Marx's work *The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850*; the 1895 edition of the Introduction was distorted by the German Social-Democrats and construed by them to mean a rejection of armed uprising and barricade fighting.

The full text of the Introduction was first published according to Engels' manuscript in the U.S.S.R. (see Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, pp. 118-38). p. 29

[10] Lenin refers here to the clash between the police and the striking workers of the Maxwell factory in St. Petersburg in December 1898. For several hours the police (200 on foot and 100 mounted police), who had arrived to arrest the "ringleaders" of the strike, could not penetrate into the workers' barracks. The workers, who had barricaded themselves, fought against the police with logs, with bottles, and with boiling water which they poured on the police. p. 29

[11] Lenin refers here to the brutality of the tsarist police and Cossacks in dispersing a demonstration in Kazan Square, St. Petersburg, on March 4 (17), 1901. Thousands of students and workers took part in this protest demonstration against the drafting of students into the army. The tsarist government used armed force to disperse the demonstration. The demonstrators were brutally beaten, several were killed and many crippled. A detailed report of the event was given in *Iskra*, No. 3, in April 1901. p. 30

[12] "*The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism*" is a criticism of the confidential Memorandum, "The Autocracy and the Zemstvo", written by the tsarist minister S. Y. Witte and published abroad illegally, and of the preface to it written by the liberal P. B. Struve.

Lenin's article occasioned serious disagreement among the editors of *Iskra*, Plekhanov and several other members of the Editorial Board expressing themselves against it.

The polemic over the article which the Board members conducted in their correspondence lasted about a month. Lenin accepted some suggestions to alter certain particular formulations but emphatically refused to modify the sharp tone of exposure and the direction of the article. p. 31

[13] *Zarya* (*Dawn*)—a Marxist scientific and political magazine published in Stuttgart in 1901-02 by the *Iskra* Editorial Board.

The following articles of Lenin were published in *Zarya*: "Casual Notes", "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", the first four chapters of "The Agrarian Ques-

tion and the 'Critics of Marx'" (published under the title "The 'Critics' on the Agrarian Question"), "Review of Home Affairs", "The Agrarian Programme of Russian Social-Democracy". Altogether four numbers (in three issues) appeared: No. 1—April 1901 (actually on March 23, new style), Nos. 2-3—December 1901, and No. 4—August 1902. p. 35

[14] *The "Regulations Governing Redemption by Peasants Who Have Emerged from Serf Dependence"* signed by Alexander II on February 19, 1861, together with the Manifesto announcing the abolition of serfdom. p. 37

[15] *Kolokol* (*The Bell*)—a revolutionary periodical published under the motto of *Vivos voco!* (I call on the living!) by A. I. Herzen and N. P. Ogaryov from July 1, 1857 to April 1865, in London and from 1865 to December 1868, in Geneva. In 1868 the periodical was published in French with a supplement in Russian. *Kolokol* was published in an edition of 2,500 copies and spread throughout Russia. It exposed the tyranny of the autocracy, the plunder and embezzlement of the civil servants, and the ruthless exploitation of the peasants by the landlords.

Kolokol was the leading organ of the revolutionary uncensored press and the precursor of the working-class press in Russia; it played an important role in the development of the general-democratic and revolutionary movement, in the struggle against the autocracy and against serfdom.

La Revue des deux mondes (*Review of the Two Worlds*)—a French bourgeois-liberal monthly published in Paris from 1829 to 1940. It began as a literary and art journal, but subsequently began to devote considerable space to philosophy and politics. Some of the most eminent writers contributed to the review—among them Victor Hugo, George Sand, Honoré de Balzac, and Alexandre Dumas. Since 1948 it has been published under the title *La Revue. Literature, histoire, arts et sciences des deux mondes* (*The Review. The literature, history, arts and sciences of the two worlds*). p. 37

[16] *Katkov, M. N.*—reactionary journalist. From 1851 he edited *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* (*Moscow Recorder*). He was a rabid opponent, not only of the revolutionary movement, but of all social progress. p. 37

[17] *Civil Mediator*—an administrative office instituted by the tsarist government at the time of the implementation of the "Peasant Reform" of 1861. The civil mediators, appointed by the governor from among the local nobility, where empowered to investigate and render decisions on conflicts between peasants and landlords that occurred during the implementation of the "Regulations" on the emancipation of the peasants; they were actually intended to be protectors of the interests of the ruling classes. The chief function of the civil mediators was to draw up "title

deeds" which gave the precise dimensions of the peasants' allotments and their location, as well as details of the obligations of the peasants; the mediators were also charged with the supervision of peasant local self-government bodies. The mediators approved the elected officials of the peasant administration, had the right to impose penalties upon them, to arrest or fine them, and to annul the decisions of village meetings.

In this passage Lenin refers to the liberal-minded civil mediators in Tver Gubernia, who refused to implement the "Regulations" and who decided to be guided in their work by the decisions of the Assembly of the Nobility in their gubernia; this Assembly, in February 1862, had formally recognised the unsatisfactory nature of the "Regulations" and the necessity for the immediate redemption of peasant lands with state aid, as well as the introduction of a number of democratic institutions. The Tver civil mediators were arrested by the tsarist government and each was sentenced to over two years' imprisonment. p. 38

[18] *Raznochintsi* (i.e., "men of different estates")—the Russian commoner-intellectuals, drawn from the small townsfolk, the clergy, the merchant classes, the peasantry, as distinct from those drawn from the nobility. p. 38

[19] *To Young Russia*—a proclamation issued by P. G. Zaichnevsky's revolutionary group in May 1862. The proclamation called for revolutionary action against the autocracy and advanced the slogan for "a social and democratic Russian republic" in the form of a federation of the regions. p. 38

[20] *Chernyshevsky, N. G.* (1828-1889)—the great Russian revolutionary democrat, materialist philosopher, scholar, critic, and author; the leader of the revolutionary movement in the sixties of the past century. In 1862 Chernyshevsky was arrested and sentenced to 14 years' penal servitude and exile for life in Siberia, he was allowed to return only in 1883. Chernyshevsky had a tremendous influence on the development of Russian progressive social thought. p. 38

[21] *At the Glorious Post*—a collection published by the Narodniks to commemorate forty years of literary and social activity (1860-1900) of the Narodnik ideologist N. K. Mikhailovsky. p. 39

[22] *Sovremennik* (*The Contemporary*)—a monthly scientific, political, and literary journal founded by Alexander Pushkin; published in St. Petersburg from 1836 to 1866. From 1847 it was published by N. A. Nekrasov and I. I. Panayev. Among the contributors were V. G. Belinsky, N. G. Chernyshevsky, N. A. Dobrolyubov, N. V. Shelgunov, M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin, and M. A. Antonovich. *Sovremennik* was the most progressive journal of its day; it voiced the aspirations of revolutionary democracy. It was closed down by the tsarist government in 1866. p. 39

[23] *Russkoye Slovo* (*Russian Word*)—a prominently progressive literary and political monthly published in St. Petersburg from 1859 to 1866, among its contributors were D. I. Pisarev and N. V. Shelgunov. The journal had considerable influence among the youth of the sixties. It was closed down by the tsarist government in 1866. p. 39

[24] *Dyen* (*The Day*)—a weekly newspaper published in Moscow from 1861 to 1865 by I. S. Aksakov. p. 39

[25] *Literary Fund* (The Literary Fund Society for Aid to Indigent Writers and Scientists and Their Families)—a legal benevolent society founded in St. Petersburg in 1859 with the participation of N. G. Chernyshevsky. Under the pretext of helping indigent writers and scientists, the organisers made an attempt to muster the progressive, revolutionary-minded section of the intelligentsia. In April 1862 an attempt was made by progressives to establish a legal student society through the founding of a "Department for Aid to Poor Students". The Department was headed by a student committee. A considerable section of the committee was connected with the illegal revolutionary organisation Zemlya i Volya (Land and Freedom). In June 1862 the Department was closed by the tsarist government. p. 40

[26] *The Chess Club* was founded on the initiative of N. G. Chernyshevsky and his closest associates in St. Petersburg in January 1862. Among the leading members of the Club were N. A. Nekrasov, the brothers A. A. and N. A. Serno-Solovyevich, the brothers V. S. and N. S. Kurochkin, P. L. Lavrov, G. Y. Blagosvetlov, G. Z. Yeliseyev, and N. G. Pomyalovsky. Members of the illegal Zemlya i Volya organisation also belonged to the Club. The Chess Club was actually a literary club, the centre of the St. Petersburg revolutionary-minded intelligentsia. In June 1862 the Club was closed by the Tsarist government. p. 40

[27] *Radishchev, A. N.* (1749-1802)—Russian writer and revolutionary. In his famous work *A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*, he made the first open attack on serfdom in Russia. By order of Catherine II he was sentenced to death for the book, but the sentence was commuted to 10 years' exile in Siberia. He returned from exile under amnesty, but when the tsarist government threatened him with new persecutions he committed suicide. Lenin considered Radishchev to have been one of the most outstanding champions of progress among the Russian people. p. 41

[28] *Arakcheyev, A. A.*—reactionary tsarist statesman at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of nineteenth centuries; he greatly influenced home and foreign policies during the reigns of Paul I and Alexander I. An epoch of unlimited police despotism and the outrages of the controlling military is associated with his name ("Arakcheyevshchina"). p. 41

[29] *The Decembrist Revolt*—led by a group of revolutionaries from the nobility who opposed the autocracy and serfdom. p. 41

[30] Lenin refers to the participation of the troops of Tsar Nicholas I in the suppression of the revolutionary movement in Europe in 1848-49, particularly the revolution in Hungary in 1849. p. 41

[31] *États généraux* (*The States General*)—a representative body of the social-estates of France from the fourteenth to the eighteenth century, consisting of deputies from the nobility, the clergy, and the Third Estate, it was convened by the king for the settlement of administrative and financial questions. The States General were not convened for 175 years—from 1614 to 1789. When they were convened in 1789 by Louis XVI for the purpose of settling the financial crisis, the body was proclaimed as the National Assembly by a decision of the deputies representing the Third Estate. p. 41

[32] *Herzen, A. I.* (1812-1870)—prominent Russian revolutionary democrat, materialist philosopher, publicist, and author. p. 42

[33] *General Vannovsky*, appointed Minister of Education in 1901, made use of liberal phrases such as "love" and "heartfelt solicitude" for the student youth, with the aim of quietening the student disturbances. After introducing a number of insignificant reforms in the sphere of education, he resorted to renewed repressive measures against the revolutionary students—arrests, banishment, expulsions from universities, etc. p. 44

[34] *Volnoye Slovo* (*Free Word*)—a weekly, and from No. 37 a fortnightly, periodical published in Geneva from 1881 to 1883; altogether 62 issues appeared. *Volnoye Slovo* claimed to have as its purpose the unification of opposition elements and propagated liberal ideas on the need to reform the Russian social system on "principles of freedom and self-government". Actually it was founded with the knowledge of the secret police by members of the Holy Guard (a secret organisation promoted by the biggest landed nobility and high government officials, headed by Prince A. P. Shuvalov and others) for purposes of political provocation. *Volnoye Slovo* was edited by the police agent A. P. Malshinsky.

At the end of 1882 the Holy Guard collapsed and *Volnoye Slovo*, beginning with No. 52 (January 8, 1883), was edited by M. P. Dragomanov; it claimed to be the organ of the Zemstvo League, which did not exist as a permanent and properly-constituted organisation. p. 50

[35] *Pravitelstvenny Vestnik* (*Government Herald*)—official government newspaper published in St. Petersburg from 1869 to 1917. p. 50

[36] *The Assembly of Notables of Louis XVI*—an assembly of the highest representatives of the privileged social-estates of France convened by King Louis XVI in 1787 and 1788 to settle the country's financial

crisis. The Assembly refused to pass an ordinance taxing the privileged social-estates and Louis XVI was forced to convene the States General. p. 52

[37] *Dictatorship of the heart*—the name given ironically to the short-lived policy of flirting with the liberals, pursued by the tsarist official Loris-Melikov, who, in 1880, was appointed chief of the Supreme Administrative Commission to combat "sedition" and, later, Minister of the Interior. p. 53

[38] *Sotsial-Demokrat* (*Social-Democrat*)—a literary-political review published abroad by the Emancipation of Labour group in the period 1890-92. Altogether four issues appeared.

Lenin quotes an article by Vera Zasulich entitled "Revolutionaries from the Bourgeois Milieu", published in No. 1 for 1890. p. 54

[39] *Narodnaya Volya* (*The People's Will*)—a secret Narodnik terrorist organisation, whose members carried out the assassination of Alexander II, on March 1, 1881; it came into being in August 1879, following the split in the secret society Zemlya i Volya (Land and Freedom). The Narodnaya Volya was headed by an Executive Committee which included A. I. Zhelyabov, A. D. Mikhailov, M. F. Frolenko, N. A. Morozov V. N. Figner, S. L. Perovskaya, and A. A. Kvyatkovsky. The immediate aim of the Narodnaya Volya was the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy, while its programme provided for the establishment of a "permanent popular representative body" elected on the basis of universal suffrage, the proclamation of democratic liberties, the transfer of land to the people, and the elaboration of measures for the factories to pass into the hands of the workers. The Narodnaya Volya, however, was unable to find the road to the masses of the people and took to political conspiracy and individual terror. The terrorist struggle of the Narodnaya Volya was not supported by a mass revolutionary movement; this enabled the government to crush the organisation by fierce persecution, death sentences, and provocation.

After 1881 the Narodnaya Volya ceased to exist as an organisation. Repeated attempts to revive it, made during the 1880s ended in failure. An instance was the terrorist group that was formed in 1886, headed by A. I. Ulyanov (Lenin's brother) and P. Y. Shevyrev; after an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Alexander III the group was exposed and its active members were executed.

Although he criticised the erroneous, utopian programme of the Narodnaya Volya, Lenin showed great respect for the selfless struggle waged by its members against tsarism. In 1899, in "A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats", Lenin stated that "the members of the old Narodnaya Volya managed to play an enormous role in the history of Russia, despite the fact that only narrow social strata supported the few heroes, and despite the fact that it was by no means a revolutionary theory which served as the banner of the movement" (see present edition, Vol. 4, p. 181). p. 54

[40] *Land redemption payments* were fixed by the "Regulations Governing Redemption by Peasants Who Have Emerged from Serf Dependence", approved on February 19, 1861. The tsarist government compelled peasants to pay redemption money for the land allotted to them at a rate several times higher than the actual value of the land. Upon the conclusion of the redemption deal, the government paid a sum of money to the landlord as redemption money, which sum was regarded as a debt to be repaid by the peasant in annual instalments over a period of 49 years. The "land redemption payments" were unbearably burdensome for the peasants and led to mass ruin and pauperisation. Peasants who had formerly been landlord's serfs alone paid a sum of about 2,000 million rubles to the tsarist government, while the land they received was not worth more than 544 million rubles. Since the deals did not take effect immediately, but at various times up to 1883, the payments were to have continued until 1932. The peasant movement at the time of the First Russian Revolution (1905-07), however, compelled the tsarist government to cancel the land redemption payments as from January 1907. p. 56

[41] *Rural superintendent*—an office instituted by the tsarist government in 1889 to increase the power of the landlords over the peasantry. The rural superintendents, appointed from among the local landed nobility, were granted tremendous powers, not only administrative, but juridical, which included the right to arrest peasants and order corporal punishment. p. 59

[42] "*Separate Supplement*" *to Rabochaya Mysl*—a pamphlet published by the editors of the "Economist" newspaper *Rabochaya Mysl* in September 1899. The pamphlet, especially the included article "Our Reality", signed R. M., was a candid expose of the opportunist views of the "Economists". Lenin criticised the pamphlet in his article "A Retrograde Trend in Russian Social-Democracy" (see present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 255-85), and in his book *What Is To Be Done?* (see present volume, pp. 361-67, 397, 407-08). p. 67

[43] *Bernsteinism*—an anti-Marxist trend in international Social-Democracy which arose in Germany at the end of the nineteenth century and derived its name from the German Social-Democrat Eduard Bernstein. Bernstein set out to revise the revolutionary teachings of Marx in the spirit of bourgeois liberalism.

In Russia Bernsteinism had its adherents in the "legal Marxists" the "Economists", the Bundists, and the Mensheviks. p. 73

[44] *Listok* (*Small Paper*)—a monthly newspaper of constitutional liberal views published illegally abroad by Prince P. V. Dolgorukov. Altogether twenty-two numbers were issued between November 1862 and July 1864. The first five numbers were issued in Brussels, the others in London. p. 76

[45] *Narodnoye Pravo* (*People's Right*) *Party*—an underground organisation of the democratic intelligentsia formed in 1893, with the

assistance of ex-members of the *Narodnaya Volya* (M. A. Natanson and others), and crushed by the tsarist government in the spring of 1894. The Narodnoye Pravo issued two programmatic documents "An Urgent Question" and "Manifesto". Most of the Narodnoye Pravo members subsequently joined the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. p. 79

[46] Lenin refers here to a thesis in Marx's *The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850* (see Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1858, p. 139). p. 79

[47] *Novoye Vremya* (*New Times*)—a St. Petersburg newspaper published from 1868 to October 1917. At first moderately liberal, it became after 1876 the organ of the most reactionary circles of the nobility and the state bureaucracy. The paper conducted a struggle, not only against the revolutionary, but also against the bourgeois-liberal, movement. From 1905 onwards it became an organ of the Black Hundreds. p. 81

[48] The circular referred to was sent out by the Central Press Board to all newspaper and magazine editors after *Novoye Vremya* published the article "Apropos of the Labour Unrest". The circular was reproduced in *Iskra*, No. 6 (July 1901) in the article "St. Petersburg" (section "From Our Social Life"). p. 81

[49] The strike movement of 1885 involved many textile enterprises in Vladimir, Moscow, Tver, and other gubernias of the industrial centre of Russia. The January strike of the workers at the Nikolskoye Mill, near Orekhovo-Zuyevo, belonging to Morozov, was the biggest and had the greatest significance. The principal demands of the strikers were the reduction of fines, the introduction of a regular hiring system, etc. The strike was led by the advanced workers P. Moiseyenko, L. Ivanov, and V. Volkov. The Morozov strike, in which over 8,000 workers took part, was crushed by tsarist troops and over 600 workers were arrested. Under pressure of the strike movement of 1885-86, the tsarist government was forced to issue a law on fines (the Law of June 3, 1886), according to which fine-moneys were to be used for the needs of the workers and were not to go into the employer's pocket. p. 83

[50] *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* (*Moscow Recorder*)—a newspaper founded in 1756; beginning with the 1860s, it expressed the views of the most reactionary monarchist elements among the landlords and the clergy; from 1905 onwards, it was one of the chief organs of the Black Hundreds. It continued publication until the October Revolution of 1917. p. 83

[51] Lenin refers to mass strikes of St. Petersburg workers, mainly in the textile industry, in 1895 and, particularly, 1896. The 1896 strike began on the Kalinkin Cotton-Spinning Mill on May 23. The immediate cause of the strike was the employers' refusal to pay the

workers in full for holidays on the occasion of the coronation of Nicholas II. The strike spread rapidly to all the main cotton-spinning and weaving mills of St. Petersburg, and then to large machine-building plants, a rubber factory, a paper factory, and a sugar refinery. For the first time the proletariat of the capital launched a struggle against its exploiters on a broad front. Over 30,000 workers went on strike. The strike was conducted under the leadership of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, which issued leaflets and manifestos calling on the workers to stand solid and steadfast in defence of their rights; the League published and distributed the strikers' main demands, which included the ten-and-a-half-hour working day, increased rates of pay, and payment of wages on time.

The report of the strike produced a tremendous impression abroad. The Berlin *Vorwärts* (*Forward*) and the Vienna *Arbeiter Zeitung* (*Workers' Gazette*) carried accounts of the strike. An address from English workers, signed by the leaders of all socialist and trade-union organisations, was translated into Russian and distributed by the League of Struggle among the St. Petersburg workers. At a meeting of London trade unions a report on the strike by Vera Zasulich and a speech by Eleanor Marx-Aveling were greeted with great enthusiasm and the audience took up a collection to aid the strikers; similar collections were taken up in other trade unions. Collections for the St. Petersburg strikers were organised in Germany, Austria, and Poland. The London Congress of the Second International, which took place in July 1896, cheered Plekhanov's report of the 1896 strike and adopted a special resolution greeting the Russian workers who were "struggling against one of the last bastions of European reaction".

The St. Petersburg strikes gave an impetus to the working-class movement in Moscow and other Russian cities, they forced the government to speed up the review of the factory laws and to issue the Law of June 2 (14), 1897 limiting the working day at all factories and mills to eleven and a half hours. The strikes, as Lenin subsequently wrote, "ushered in an era of steady advance in the working-class movement, that most powerful factor in the whole of our revolution" (see present edition, Vol. 13, "Preface to the Collection *Twelve Years*"). p. 83

[52] The pamphlet *The Secret Documents on the Law of June 2, 1897* was published in Geneva in 1898 by the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad. p. 83

[53] *Grazhdanin* (*The Citizen*)—a reactionary newspaper published in St. Petersburg from 1872 to 1914. From the 1880s on, it spoke for the extreme monarchists. The newspaper existed mainly on subsidies from the tsarist government. p. 99

[54] *Sipyagin, D. S.*—reactionary statesman in tsarist Russia; Minister of the Interior from 1899 to 1902.

Shakhovskoi, D. I.—prince, Zemstvo leading figure. p. 101

[55] *Manilov*—a character from Gogol's *Dead Souls* whose name has become a synonym for complacency, sentimentality, and futile day-dreaming. p. 102

[56] "*The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'*" was written between June and September 1901. The first four chapters were published in the journal *Zarya*, Nos. 2-3, in December 1901, under the title "the 'Critics' on the Agrarian Question. First Essay"; the contribution bore the signature of *N. Lenin*. The chapters were later published legally in Odessa (with the inscription "Permitted by the Censor". Odessa July 23, 1905) by the Burevestnik Publishers as a separate pamphlet *The Agrarian Question and the "Critics of Marx"*, by N. Lenin. The title was retained by the author for further publications of the essay in whole or in part.

Chapter V-IX were first published in the legal magazine *Obrazovaniye* (*Education*), No. 2, February 1906. They had subtitles; chapters I-IV, published in *Zarya* and in the 1905 pamphlet had none.

The nine chapters with two additional ones (X and XI) were first published together in 1908 in St. Petersburg in *The Agrarian Question*, Part I, by *V. I. Ilyin* (V. I. Lenin), chapters I-IV had subtitles; some editorial changes were made in the text and some notes added.

Chapter XII (the last) was, first printed in the collection *Current Life* in 1908.

The first nine chapters are included in the present volume; chapters X, XI, and XII, written in 1907, will appear in Volume 13 of the present edition of the *Collected Works* of V. I. Lenin. p. 103

[57] *Obrazovaniye* (*Education*)—a literary, popular-scientific, social and political monthly published in St. Petersburg from 1892 to 1909. There were Marxists among its contributors from 1902 to 1908. p. 103

[58] *Russkoye Bogatstvo* (*Russian Wealth*)—a monthly magazine published in St. Petersburg from 1876 to the middle of 1918. In the early 1890s it became an organ of the liberal Narodniks and was edited by S. N. Krivenko and N. K. Mikhailovsky. It preached conciliation with the tsarist government and abandonment of all revolutionary struggle against it. The magazine was bitterly hostile to Marxism and the Russian Marxists. p. 107

[59] *Nachalo* (*The Beginning*)—a literary, scientific, and political monthly published by the "legal Marxists"; it appeared in St. Petersburg in the first half of 1899, with P. B. Struve and M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky among its editors. Besides the "legal Marxists", the contributors included G. V. Plekhanov and V. I. Zasulich. The tsarist government suppressed the journal in June 1899.

Lenin published in *Nachalo* several reviews (see present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 65-73 and pp. 94-103) and part of the third chapter of his *Development of Capitalism in Russia*, entitled "The Land-

owners' Transition from Corvée to Capitalist Economy" (see present edition, Vol. 3, pp. 191-219).

Lenin refers to Bulgakov's article "A Contribution to the Question of the Capitalist Evolution of Agriculture" published in Nos. 1-2 and 3 of the journal for January-February and March 1899. p. 107

[60] *Zhizn* (*Life*)—a monthly magazine published in St. Petersburg from 1897 to 1901; in 1902 it was published abroad. Beginning with 1899 the magazine was an organ of the "legal Marxists".

In the December 1899 issue (No. 12) Lenin published "Reply to Mr. P. Nezhdanov" and in the issues of January and February 1900 (Nos. 1 and 2), two articles under the heading "Capitalism in Agriculture (Kautsky's Book and Mr. Bulgakov's Article)" (see present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 160-65 and pp. 105-59). p. 108

[61] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1959, p. 644. p. 117

[62] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1959, p. 728. p. 118

[63] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1959, pp. 724-27. p. 118

[64] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1959, pp. 727-28. p. 118

[65] *Clan property*—the land owned by the clan. p. 121

[66] Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1959, pp. 635-36. p. 123

[67] See Karl Marx, *Theorien über den Mehrwert*, II, S. 80-81, Berlin, 1923. p. 127

[68] *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (*Socialist Monthly*)—the principal organ of the opportunists in German Social-Democracy and one of the organs of international opportunism. During the imperialist world war (1914-18) the magazine adopted a social-chauvinist position. It was published in Berlin from 1897 to 1933. p. 134

[69] *Die Neue Zeit* (*New Times*)—a German Social-Democratic magazine published in Stuttgart from 1883 to 1923. Between 1885 and 1895 the magazine published some of Engels' articles. Engels often gave pointers to the editors of *Die Neue Zeit* and sharply criticised their deviations from Marxism. Beginning with the middle nineties, after Engels' death, the magazine propagated Karl Kautsky's views and regularly published articles by revisionists. During the imperialist world war (1914-18) the magazine occupied a Centrist position and in actuality supported the social-chauvinists. p. 140

[70] *The Exceptional Law Against the Socialists* was promulgated in Germany in 1878. Under this law all organisations of the Social-

Democratic Party, all workers' mass organisations, and the working-class press were prohibited, socialist literature was confiscated, and the banishment of Social-Democrats was begun. The law was annulled in 1890 under pressure of the mass working-class movement. p. 150

[71] *Vorwärts* (*Forward*)—the central organ of German Social-Democracy. It began publication in 1876, with Wilhelm Liebknecht as one of its editors. Frederick Engels conducted a struggle against all manifestations of opportunism in its columns. In the late nineties, after Engels' death, *Vorwärts* regularly published articles by the opportunists who dominated German Social-Democracy and the Second International. p. 150

[72] See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, "The Manifesto of the Communist Party", Moscow, 1958, p. 38. p. 154

[73] See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 627. p. 154

[74] See Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Moscow, 1959, pp. 394-411. p. 155

[75] *N.—on*, *Nikolai—on*—pseudonyms of N. F. Danielson, one of the ideologists of the liberal Narodniks in the eighties and nineties of the last century. p. 158

[76] *Proudhonism*—an unscientific trend in petty-bourgeois socialism, hostile to Marxism, so called after its ideologist, the French anarchist Pierre Joseph Proudhon. Proudhon criticised big capitalist property from the petty-bourgeois position and dreamed of perpetuating petty property ownership; he proposed the foundation of "people s" and "exchange" banks, with the aid of which the workers would be able to acquire the means of production, become handicraftsmen, and ensure the "just" marketing of their wares. Proudhon did not understand the role and significance of the proletariat and displayed a negative attitude towards the class struggle, the proletarian revolution, and the dictatorship of the proletariat; as an anarchist he denied the necessity for the state. Marx and Engels struggled persistently against Proudhon's efforts to impose his views on the First International. Proudhonism was subjected to a ruthless criticism in Marx's *Poverty of Philosophy*. The determined struggle waged by Marx, Engels, and their supporters ended in the complete victory of Marxism over Proudhonism in the First International.

Lenin called Proudhonism the "dull thinking of a petty-bourgeois and a philistine" incapable of comprehending the viewpoint of the working class. The ideas of Proudhonism are widely utilised by bourgeois "theoreticians" in their class-collaboration propaganda. p. 158

[77] *Der Volksstaat* (*The People's State*)—the central newspaper of the German Social-Democratic (Eisenacher) Party; published in

Leipzig from 1869 to 1876 under the editorship of Wilhelm Liebknecht. Marx and Engels contributed to the paper. p. 158

[78] See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 613. p. 158

[79] Lenin quotes here Frederick Engels' Preface to the second edition of his *The Housing Question* (see Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 548). p. 159

[80] *Ruth*—in the biblical legend Ruth gleaned ears of corn in an alien field. The expression "*Ruth's gleaning*" is here used in the sense of easy, carefree labour. p. 169

[81] *The younger brother*, i .e., the people—a patronising expression used in liberal literature in tsarist times. p. 177

[82] *In this Suzdal fashion*—in a primitive superficial fashion. The expression originates from the fact that before the Revolution, crude, gaudily painted, and cheap icons were made in Suzdal Uyezd. p. 178

[83] *The League for Social and Political Questions* (*Verein für Sozialpolitik*)—an association of German bourgeois economists, founded in 1872. The purpose of the association was to counteract the influence of Social-Democracy among the working class and to subordinate the working-class movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie. p. 180

[84] *Erhebungen über die Lage der Landwirtschaft in Grossherzogthum Baden, 1883. Veranstaltet durch das grossherzogliche Ministerium des Innern. Bd. IV.* (An Inquiry into the State of Agriculture in the Grand Duchy of Baden, 1883. Undertaken by the Ministry of the Interior of the Grand Duchy. Vol. IV.). p. 184

[85] See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Moscow, 1959, p. 787. p. 186

[86] From M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin's *Modern Idyll*. p. 193

[87] It may be seen from the text of Chapters VII and IX, first published in the magazine *Obrazovaniye*, that Lenin intended to examine French agricultural statistics in this essay and to analyse the "critical" views of the French economist Maurice. This plan was not put into effect, and in the 1908 edition Lenin changed the passages showing his original design. Thus he omitted two words "and French" from the sentence: "The proletarisation of the peasantry continues, as we shall prove below by the mass of German and French statistics...." In the phrase: "The rapid growth of the towns causes a steady increase in the number of such 'dairy farmers', and, of course, there will always be the Hechts, Davids, Hertzes, and Chernovs (and, not to offend France, the Maurices as well, whom we'll mention later)...", the words in parenthesis were omitted.

The end of the sentence, "For this reason, to confound the two processes, or to ignore either of them, may easily lead to the crudest blunders, an example of which we shall see later, when studying Bulgakov's analysis of the French data", was changed to: "numerous examples of which are scattered through Bulgakov's book". p. 221

[88] *The "Unity" Conference*, held in Zurich on September 21-22 (October 4-5), 1901, was an attempt to unite the Russian Social-Democratic organisations abroad on a platform of Marxist principles. The Conference was attended by representatives of the foreign department of the *Iskra* and *Zarya* organisation, the *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation (which included the Emancipation of Labour group), the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, the Bund, and the Borba (Struggle) group.

The Conference was preceded by a preliminary conference of representatives of these organisations in Geneva (June 1901). The Geneva Conference adopted a resolution containing fundamental principles for agreement and joint action.

This apparent initial *rapprochement* was to have been officially constituted at the "Unity" Conference; but articles by the leaders of the Union Abroad, published in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10 (September 1901), as well as amendments and addenda to the resolution of the Geneva Conference, submitted by the Union Abroad during the "Unity" Conference, showed that the Union Abroad still adhered to its opportunist position. The representatives of *Iskra* and *Sotsial-Demokrat* read a declaration and withdrew from the Conference.

Lenin took part in the "Unity" Conference under the name of Frey and spoke under that name. This was his first public appearance among the Russian Social-Democrats abroad. p. 223

[89] *The Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad* was founded in Geneva in 1894 on the initiative of the Emancipation of Labour group, which at first supervised its activities and edited its publications. Opportunist elements (the "young" Social-Democrats the "Economists") later gained the upper hand in the Union. At the Union's first conference, in November 1898, the Emancipation of Labour group refused to bear further responsibility for the editorship of its publications. The final break with the Union and the withdrawal of the Emancipation of Labour group took place in April 1900, at the Union's second conference, when the Emancipation of Labour group and its supporters left the Conference and founded the autonomous organisation *Sotsial-Demokrat*. p. 225

[90] The *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation was founded by the Emancipation of Labour group and its supporters after the split in the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad (May 1900). In a leaflet-manifesto the organisation declared its purposes to be "the promotion of the socialist movement among the Russian proletariat" and the struggle against every opportunist attempt to distort Marx-

ism. The organisation published a Russian translation of *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, a number of works by Marx and Engels, and several pamphlets by Plekhanov, Kautsky, and others. In October 1901, on Lenin's initiative, the *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation joined forces with the *Iskra-Zarya* organisation abroad and formed the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad. p. 225

[91] This group, consisting of D. B. Ryazanov, Y. M. Steklov (Nevzorov, E. L. Gurevich (V. Danevich, Y. Smirnov), which was formed in Paris in 1900, adopted, in May 1901, the name of "Borba" (struggle). In an attempt to reconcile the revolutionary and opportunist trends in Russian Social-Democracy, the Borba group proposed the unification of the Social-Democratic organisations abroad and for this purpose entered into negotiations with the *Iskra-Zarya* and *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisations and with the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad; the group also took part in the Geneva Conference (June 1901) and in the "Unity" Conference (October 1901). In the autumn of 1901 the Borba group took shape as an independent literary group and announced its publications. In these publications ("Material for a Party Programme", Issues I-III; "Leaflet" No. 1, 1902, etc.) the group distorted the revolutionary theory of Marxism and displayed hostility to the Leninist principles of organisation and the tactical line of Russian revolutionary Social-Democracy. On account of its deviation from Social-Democratic views and tactics, its disorganising activities and its lack of contact with Social-Democratic organisations in Russia, the Borba group was not allowed to participate in the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. By decision of the Second Congress, the Borba group was dissolved. p. 225

[92] *Millerandism*—an opportunist trend called after the French social-reformist Millerand, who, in 1899, entered the reactionary bourgeois government of General Galiffet, the butcher of the Paris Commune. p. 226

[93] *Mountain and Gironde*—the two political groups of the bourgeoisie during the French bourgeois revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. *La Montagne* (Mountain) was the name given to the Jacobins, the most consistent representatives of the revolutionary class of the period—bourgeoisie; they advocated the abolition of absolutism and the feudal system. The Girondists, as distinct from them, vacillated between revolution and counter-revolution, and chose the way of compromise with the royalists.

Lenin applied the term "Socialist Gironde" to the opportunist tendency in Social-Democracy and the term "Mountain" or proletarian Jacobins, to the revolutionary Social-Democrats. After the R.S.D.L.P. had split into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, Lenin, on many occasions, stressed the point that the Mensheviks were the Girondist tendency in the working-class movement. p. 227

[94] *The Lübeck Parteitag* of the German Social-Democratic Party was held between September 9 and 15 (22-28), 1901. The central issue at the Congress was the struggle against revisionism, which had by that time taken form as the Right Wing of the Party, with its own programme and periodical press (*Sozialistische Monatshefte*). Bernstein, the leader of the revisionists, had long been advocating the revision of scientific socialism; at the Congress he demanded "freedom to criticise" Marxism. The Congress rejected the resolution introduced by Bernstein's supporters and adopted a resolution that gave a direct warning to Bernstein, though without laying down the principle that Bernsteinian views were incompatible with membership of the working-class party. p. 228

[95] *Jaurèists*—followers of the French socialist J. J. Jaurès, who headed the Right reformist Wing of the French Socialist Party. Under the pretext of defending "freedom of criticism", they sought to revise the Marxist principles and preached the class collaboration of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. In 1902 they formed the French Socialist Party, which adhered to reformist principles. p. 228

[96] *The Workers' Party for the Political Liberation of Russia*—a small Narodnik-type organisation; existed in Minsk, Belostok and several other cities from 1899 to 1902. In 1902 the members of the party joined the Socialist Revolutionary Party. p. 228

[97] *The Bund*—the General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia; founded in 1897, it embraced mainly the Jewish artisans in the western regions of Russia. The Bund joined the R.S.D.L.P. at its First Congress in March 1898. At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. Bund delegates insisted on the recognition of their organisation as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat in Russia. The Congress rejected this organisational nationalism, whereupon the Bund withdrew from the Party.

In 1906, following the Fourth ("Unity") Congress, the Bund reaffiliated with the R.S.D.L.P. The Bundists constantly supported the Mensheviks and waged an incessant struggle against the Bolsheviks. Despite its formal affiliation with the R.S.D.L.P., the Bund remained an organisation of a bourgeois-nationalist character. As opposed to the Bolshevik programmatic demand for the right of nations to self-determination, the Bund put forward the demand for cultural-national autonomy. During the First World War of 1914-18 the Bund took the stand of social-chauvinism. In 1917 the Bund supported the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government and fought on the side of the enemies of the October Socialist Revolution. During the Civil War, prominent Bundists joined forces with the counter-revolution. At the same time, a turn began among the rank and file in favour of support to the Soviet Government. When the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat over the internal counter-revolution and foreign intervention became apparent, the Bund declared its abandonment of the strug-

gle against the Soviet system In March 1921, the Bund dissolved itself and part of the membership joined the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) as new members. p. 229

[98] *Code of Laws of the Russian Empire*—a collected edition of the laws operative in the Russian Empire, published in fifteen volumes in 1833 and effective from 1835; a sixteenth volume was published in 1892. p. 231

[99] The reference is to the proclamation entitled "*A First Letter to the Famine-Stricken Peasants*", which appeared in 1892 over the signature "Peasant Well-Wishers". About 1,800 copies of the proclamation were printed at the illegal Lakhta Press belonging to the Narodnaya Volya Group in St. Petersburg. p. 236

[100] Lenin refers to Judas Golovlyov—a sanctimonious, hypocritical landlord serf-owner described in M. Saltykov-Shchedrin's *The Golovlyov Family*. p. 237

[101] The committee here referred to is the St. Petersburg Committee of the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class which functioned in the period following the arrest of Lenin and the majority of the League leaders in December 1895; the leadership of the League fell into the hands of the "young" Social-Democrats, who supported the "Economist" position.

The League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, founded by Lenin in the autumn of 1895 united all the Marxist workers' study circles in St. Petersburg. It was headed by a Central Group (S. I. Radchenko, A. A. Vaneyev, A. A. Yakubova, N. K. Krupskaya, G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, V. V. Starkov, and others) under Lenin's direction.

The League of Struggle headed by Lenin led the revolutionary working-class movement, linking the workers' struggle in support of economic demands with the political struggle against tsarism. It was the first organisation in Russia to *combine socialism with the working-class movement* and to go over from the propaganda of Marxism among a restricted range of advanced workers to political agitation among the working-class masses on an extended scale. The League issued leaflets and pamphlets for the workers and directed their strike struggles. It was the embryo of the revolutionary working-class Marxist Party. The influence of the League was felt far beyond St. Petersburg, and similar Leagues of Struggle, patterned upon it, were formed in other cities. p. 239

[102] *The Emancipation of Labour group* was the first Russian Marxist group. It was founded in Geneva by G. V. Plekhanov in 1883; the group included P. B. Axelrod, L. G. Deutsch, V. I. Zasulich, and V. N. Ignatov.

The group did much to spread Marxism in Russia. It translated such Marxist works as *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Marx and Engels; *Wage-Labour and Capital* by Marx; *Socialism:*

Utopian and Scientific by Engels; it published them abroad and organised their distribution in Russia. Plekhanov and his group dealt a serious blow at Narodism. In 1883 Plekhanov drafted a programme for the Russian Social-Democrats and in 1885 drew up another. The two drafts were published by the Emancipation of Labour group and marked an important step towards the establishment of a Social-Democratic Party in Russia. Plekhanov's *Socialism and the Political Struggle* (1883), *Our Differences* (1885), and *The Development of the Monist View of History* (1895) played an important role in disseminating Marxist views. The group, however, made some serious mistakes; it clung to remnants of Narodnik views, overestimated the role of the liberal bourgeoisie, while underestimating the revolutionary capacity of the peasantry. These errors were the first projections of the future Menshevik views held by Plekhanov and other members of the group. The group had no practical ties with the working-class movement. Lenin pointed out that the Emancipation of Labour group "only theoretically founded the Social-Democracy and took the first step in the direction of the working-class movement" (see present edition, Vol. 20, "The Ideological Struggle in the Working-Class Movement"). At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., in August 1903, the Emancipation of Labour group announced its dissolution. p. 239

[103] *The League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad* was founded on Lenin's initiative in October 1901. The *Iskra-Zarya* organisation abroad and the *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation (which included the Emancipation of Labour group) entered the League. The task of the League was to disseminate the ideas of revolutionary Social-Democracy and promote the foundation of a militant Social-Democratic organisation. Actually, the League was the representative of *Iskra* abroad. It recruited supporters for *Iskra* from among Social-Democrats living abroad, gave it material support, organised its delivery to Russia, and published popular Marxist literature. The League issued several *Bulletins* and pamphlets. The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. approved the League as the sole Party organisation abroad, accorded it the full rights of a committee working under the leadership and control of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.

After the Second Congress the Mensheviks entrenched themselves in the League and launched their struggle against Lenin and the Bolsheviks. At the Second Congress of the League in October 1903, the Mensheviks libelled the Bolsheviks, following which Lenin and his supporters walked out. The Mensheviks adopted new Rules for the League that contradicted the Rules of the Party adopted at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. From that time onwards the League became a bulwark of Menshevism; it continued its existence until 1905. p. 241

[104] *Military settlements*—a special organisation of the Russian army introduced under Tsar Alexander I. By organising these settlements the tsarist government expected to curtail expenditure on the main-

tenance of the army, ensure a source of trained reserves, and obtain a reliable force for use against the growing revolutionary movement. The arch-reactionary A. A. Arakcheyev, Minister for War, was appointed head of the military settlements (hence the name—Arakcheyev settlements).

All peasants living on the territory allotted to the settlements were made soldiers for life. Army units were made up of settlers between the ages of 18 and 45 years ("farmers") and all other peasants fit for military service became "assistant farmers". Every farmer-settler had to feed three of the soldiers quartered on the settlement. All the settlers had to wear army uniform and undergo constant army training. Their whole lives were subordinated to a severe regime, everything, even family relations, coming under the strict regulations. Army drill and compulsory army work did not leave the peasants sufficient time for work on their farms which gradually fell into ruin

The unbearable, prison-like conditions of life and work in the military settlements led to a number of large-scale revolts, which were suppressed with incredible cruelty.

Military settlements were abolished in 1857. p. 245

[105] See Note 49. p. 248

[106] The first chapter of Lenin's *Review of Home Affairs* was published as a separate pamphlet in two editions under the title of "Fighting the Famine-Stricken". The first edition appeared as a separate reprint from *Zarya*, No. 2-3; the second edition of 3,000 copies was printed at the *Iskra* illegal press in Kishinev. p. 253

[107] The reference is to Arkady Pavlych Penochkin, a character in I. Turgenev's story "The Village Elder". p. 256

[108] Lenin quotes from M. Y. Saltykov-Shchedrin's *The History of a Town*. p. 262

[109] *Priazovsky Krai* (*Azov Region*)—a daily newspaper published in Rostov-on-Don from 1891 to 1916; it was a continuation of the newspaper *Donskoye Polye* (*The Don Field*) published from 1889 to 1891. p. 266

[110] *Collective liability*—the compulsory collective responsibility of the peasants of each village commune for the making of timely and full payments and for the fulfilment of all sorts of services to the state and to the landlords (payment of poll-taxes and of redemption instalments, provision of recruits for the army, etc.). This form of bondage, which was retained even after serfdom had been abolished, remained in force until 1906. p. 267

[111] "*Inventory*"—a criminal list maintained by the gubernia authorities; it contained detailed information on convicts banished to Siberia. p. 271

[112] The book referred to is Nik.—on's (N. F. Danielson's) *Sketches on Our Post-Reform Social Economy*, St. Petersburg, 1893. p. 278

[113] *Russkiye Vedomosti* (*Russian Recorder*)—a newspaper published in Moscow from 1863 onwards by liberal professors of Moscow University and Zemstvo personalities; it expressed the views of the liberal landlords and bourgeoisie. From 1905 onwards it was an organ of the Right Cadets; it was banned after the October Revolution together with other counter-revolutionary newspapers. p. 279

[114] *Assizes*—an institution of the tsarist courts of justice established by the judicial reform of 1864; it examined special civil and criminal cases and was a court of appeal for cases tried by the gubernia courts. Each assizes was established for several gubernias. p. 280

[115] The character referred to is Akaky Akakiyevich Bashmachkin, the hero of Gogol's story "The Greatcoat". p. 282

[116] *The Man in a Case*—the central character in Chekhov's story of that name. p. 282

[117] The reference is to the "Ordinance on Gubernia and Uyezd Zemstvo Institutions", approved by Alexander II on January 1, 1864. p. 283

[118] *Kit Kitych*—the nickname given to Tit Titych (Kit is Russian for "whale" and Tit is the Russian form of Titus) in A. N. Ostrovsky's comedy *Shouldering Another's Troubles*. p. 284

[119] *Missionerskoye Obozreniye* (*Missionary Review*)—a monthly theological journal published from 1896 to 1898 in Kiev and from 1899 to 1916 in St. Petersburg. The journal fought against all non-Orthodox Christians and was supported by the most reactionary clergy, notorious for their obscurantism and operating in close contact with the police. p. 291

[120] *Orlovsky Vestnik* (*Orel Herald*)—a daily newspaper, moderately liberal, with a social, political, and literary content, it was published in Orel from 1876 to 1918. p. 292

[121] *Stundists*—one of the religious sects persecuted in tsarist Russia. p. 292

[122] *Vera i Razum* (*Faith and Reason*)—a fortnightly theological and philosophical journal published by the Kharkov Theological Seminary from 1884 to 1916. The journal maintained an extreme reactionary position and made violent attacks on the democratic movement and on progressive ideas. p. 294

[123] *Svobodnoye Slovo* (*Free Word*)—a publishing house that issued abroad (in England and Switzerland) the works of Lev Tolstoi banned by the Russian censor and pamphlets against the oppression of non-Orthodox Christians by the tsarist government. From 1899 to 1901 the house published the journal *Svobodnaya Mysl* (*Free Thought*) and from 1901 to 1905 the journal *Svobodnoye Slovo* (*Free Word*). p. 294

[124] *Okhotny Ryad*—a street market in pre-revolutionary Moscow where mainly poultry and cooked foods were sold; the Okhotny Ryad traders were active participants in raids organised by the police, especially in breaking up student meetings and demonstrations. p. 299

[125] *Frey*—one of Lenin's pseudonyms. p. 303

[126] *Svoboda* (*Freedom*)—a journal published in Switzerland in 1901-02 by the Svoboda group that was formed in May 1901 and that referred to itself as "a revolutionary socialist group". Two issues appeared—No. 1 in 1901 and No. 2 in 1902. The Svoboda group also issued *The Eve of the Revolution: A Non-Periodical Review of Questions of Theory and of Tactics*, No. 1; the publication *Otkliki* (*Responses*), No. 1; the pamphlet *The Renaissance of Revolutionism in Russia*, by L. Nadezhdin and others

The Svoboda group was devoid of "serious, lasting ideas, of programme tactics, organisation, or roots in the masses" (see present edition Vol. 20, "On Adventurism"). Its publications advocated the ideas of "Economism" and of terrorism and supported the anti-*Iskra* groups in Russia. The Svoboda group ceased to exist in 1903. p. 311

[127] *Yuzhny Rabochy* (*Southern Worker*)—a Social-Democratic newspaper published illegally by a group of the same name from January 1900 to April 1903; altogether 12 issues appeared. The newspaper circulated chiefly among Social-Democratic organisations in the south of Russia.

Lenin said of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group that it was one of those organisations "which in words accepted *Iskra* as the guiding organ but in deeds followed their own particular plans and were distinguished for their instability on questions of principle". The group existed until the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. Subsequently the majority of the leading members of the group became Mensheviks. p. 313

[128] *Zubatov*—Colonel of the Gendarmes, tried to introduce "police socialism". He set up fake workers' organisations under the protection of the gendarmerie and the police in an effort to divert the workers from the revolutionary movement. p. 314

[129] The demonstration on December 6(18) 1876 was organised by workers and students as a protest against the tyrannical actions of the autocracy. Plekhanov, who took part in the demonstration, delivered a revolutionary speech. The demonstration was broken up by the police, and many participants were arrested and sentenced to banishment or penal servitude. p. 322

[130] The slogan "*Land and Freedom*" was released at that time by an illegal organisation of the same name (Zemlya i Volya), founded by the Narodniks in Russia in 1876. Among the leading members were G. V. Plekhanov, A. D. Mikhailov, O. V. Aptekman, A. A. Kvyatkovsky, S. M. Kravchinsky (Stepnyak), S. L. Perovskaya, N. A. Morozov, and V. N. Figner.

The Zemlya i Volya organisation viewed the peasantry as the chief revolutionary force in Russia and sought to bring about an uprising of the peasantry against tsarism. It conducted revolutionary activity in a number of Russian gubernias—Tambov, Voronezh, and others. In 1879 a terrorist grouping was formed in Zemlya i Volya which regarded individual terror to be the chief means of fighting against tsarism. At a congress held in Voronezh that year Zemlya i Volya split into two groups: Narodnaya Volya (The People's Will) and Chorny Peredel (General Redistribution). p. 322

[131] *N. A. Dobrolyubov* (1836-1861)—Russian revolutionary democrat, materialist philosopher and literary critic. p. 323

[132] *Oblomov*—the central character in the novel of that name by I. Goncharov. Oblomov was the personification of routine, stagnation, and inertia. p. 338

[133] The collection *Proletarskaya Borba* (*Proletarian Struggle*), No. 1, was published by the Ural Social-Democratic Group in 1899. The authors, who espoused "Economist" views, denied the necessity of establishing an independent working-class political party and believed that a political revolution could be accomplished by means of a general strike, without the preliminary organisation and preparation of the masses and without an armed uprising. p. 339

[134] "*The Social-Democratic Workers' Library*"—a series of pamphlets published illegally in Vilno and St. Petersburg in 1900-01. p. 339

[135] See *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1959, pp. 21-65. p. 340

[136] The reference is to the general strike of students organised in the winter of 1901-02. Some 30,000 students took part in the strike. p. 341

[137] Lenin refers to the case of Dreyfus, a French General Staff officer, a Jew, who, in 1894, was court-martialled and sentenced to life imprisonment on an obviously trumped-up charge of espionage and high treason. That provocative trial was organised by French reactionary circles. The general movement for the defence of Dreyfus that developed in France exposed the corruption of the court and sharpened the struggle between republicans and royalists. In 1899 Dreyfus was pardoned and released. It was not until 1906, after a fresh examination of the case, that Dreyfus was rehabilitated. p. 341

[138] Lenin's work *What Is To Be Done?* was written at the end of 1901 and early in 1902. In "Where To Begin", published in *Iskra*, No. 4 (May 1901), Lenin said that the article represented "a skeleton plan to be developed in greater detail in a pamphlet now in preparation for print".

Lenin began the actual writing of the book in the autumn of 1901. In his "Preface to the Pamphlet *Documents of the* '*Unity*' *Conference*", written in November 1901, Lenin said that the book was in preparation "to be published in the near future". In December Lenin published (in *Iskra*, No. 12) his article "A Talk with Defenders of Economism", which he later called a conspectus of *What Is To Be Done?* He wrote the Preface to the book in February 1902 and early in March the book was published by Dietz in Stuttgart. An announcement of its publication was printed in *Iskra*, No. 18, March 10, 1902.

In republishing the book in 1907 as part of the collection *Twelve Years*, Lenin omitted Section A of Chapter V, "Who Was Offended by the Article 'Where To Begin'", stating in the Preface that the book was being published with slight abridgements representing the omission solely of details of the organisational relationships and minor polemical remarks. Lenin added five footnotes to the new edition.

The text of this volume is that of the 1902 edition, verified with the 1907 edition. p. 347

[139] *Rabochaya Gazeta* (*Workers' Gazette*)—an illegal newspaper issued by the Kiev group of Social-Democrats. Two issues appeared—No. 1 in August and No. 2 in December (dated November) 1897. The First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. adopted *Rabochaya Gazeta* as the official organ of the Party, but the newspaper discontinued publication shortly after the Congress, as a result of a police raid on the printing-press and the arrest of the Central Committee. p. 350

[140] *Lassalleans and Eisenachers*—two parties in the German working-class movement in the sixties and early seventies of the nineteenth century.

Lassalleans—supporters of Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864) and adherents of his theories; Lassalle was a German petty-bour-

geois socialist who played an active part in organising (in 1863) the General Association of German Workers, a political organisation that existed up to 1875. The programmatic demands of the Association were formulated by Lassalle in a number of articles and speeches. Lassalle regarded the state as a supra-class organisation and, in conformity with that philosophically idealist view, believed that the Prussian state could bo utilised to solve the social problem through the setting up of producers' co-operatives with its aid. Marx said that Lassalle advocated a "Royal-Prussian state socialism". Lassalle directed the workers towards peaceful, parliamentary forms of struggle, believing that the introduction of universal suffrage would make Prussia a "free people's state". To obtain universal suffrage he promised Bismarck the support of his Association against the liberal opposition and also in the implementation of Bismarck's plan to reunite Germany "from above" under the hegemony of Prussia. Lassalle repudiated the revolutionary class struggle, denied the importance of trade unions and of strike action, ignored the international tasks of the working class, and infected the German workers with nationalist ideas. His contemptuous attitude towards the peasantry, which he regarded as a reactionary force, did much damage to the German working-class movement. Marx and Engels fought his harmful utopian dogmatism and his reformist views. Their criticism helped free the German workers from the influence of Lassallean opportunism.

Eisenachers—members of the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Germany, founded in 1869 at the Eisenach Congress. The leaders of the Eisenachers were August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, who were under the ideological influence of Marx and Engels. The Eisenach programme stated that the Social-Democratic Workers' Party of Germany considered itself "a section of the International Working Men's Association and shared its aspirations". Thanks to the regular advice and criticism of Marx and Engels, the Eisenachers pursued a more consistent revolutionary policy than did Lassalle's General Association of German Workers; in particular, on the question of German reunification, they followed "the democratic and proletarian road, struggling against the slightest concession to Prussianism, Bismarckism, and nationalism" (see present edition, Vol. 19, "August Bebel"). Under the influence of the growing working-class movement and of increased government repressions, the two parties united at the Gotha Congress in 1875 to form the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany, of which the Lassalleans formed the opportunist wing. p. 352

[141] *Guesdists and Possibilists*—two trends in the French socialist movement arising out of the split in the French Workers' Party in 1882.

Guesdists—followers of Jules Guesde, constituted the Marxist wing of the movement and advocated an independent revolutionary policy of the proletariat. In 1901 they formed the Socialist Party of France.

Possibilists—a petty-bourgeois reformist trend that sought to divert the proletariat from revolutionary methods of struggle. The Possibilists advocated the restriction of working-class activity to what is "possible" under capitalism. In 1902, in conjunction with other reformist groups, the Possibilists organised the French Socialist Party.

In 1905 the Socialist Party of France and the French Socialist Party united to form a single party. During the imperialist war of 1914-18, Jules Guesde, together with the entire leadership of the French Socialist Party, went over to the camp of social-chauvinism. p. 352

[142] Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1959, p. 245. p. 354

[143] *Cadets*—the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the principal bourgeois party in Russia, representing the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie. It was formed in October 1905. Parading as democrats and calling themselves the party of "people's freedom", the Cadets tried to win the following of the peasantry. Their aim was to preserve tsarism in the form of a constitutional monarchy. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution, the Cadets organised counter-revolutionary conspiracies and revolts against the Soviet Republic. p. 356

[144] *Bezzaglavtsi*—from the title of the journal *Bez Zaglaviya* (*Without a Title*)—were organisers of, and contributors to, the journal published in St. Petersburg in 1906 by S. N. Prokopovich, Y. D. Kuskova, V. Y. Bogucharsky, and others. The journal openly advocated revisionism, supported the Mensheviks and liberals and opposed an independent proletarian policy. Lenin called the group "pro-Menshevik Cadets or pro-Cadet Mensheviks". p. 356

[145] *Ilovaisky, D. I.* (1832-1920)—historian; author of numerous official textbooks of history that were extensively used in primary and secondary schools in pre-revolutionary Russia. In Ilovaisky's texts history was reduced mainly to acts of kings and generals; the historical process was explained through secondary and fortuitous circumstances. p. 357

[146] *Katheder-Socialism*—a trend in bourgeois political economy that emerged in Germany in the seventies and eighties of the nineteenth century. Under the guise of socialism the *Katheder*-Socialists preached bourgeois-liberal reformism from university chairs (*Katheder*). They maintained that the bourgeois state was above classes, that it was capable of reconciling hostile classes and gradually introducing "socialism", without affecting the interests of the capitalists, while, at the same time, taking the demands of the workers as far as possible into consideration. In Russia the

views of the *Katheder*-Socialists were disseminated by the "legal Marxists". p. 357

[147] *Nozdryov*—a character in Gogol's *Dead Souls* whom the author called "an historical personage" for the reason that wherever he went he left behind him a scandalous "history". p. 358

[148] *The Hanover resolution*—resolution on "Attacks on the Fundamental Views and Tactics of the Party", adopted by the German Social-Democratic Party Congress at Hanover, September 27-October 2 (October 9-14), 1899. A discussion of this question at the Congress and the adoption of a special resolution were necessitated by the fact that the opportunists, led by Bernstein, launched a revisionist attack on Marxist theory and demanded a reconsideration of Social-Democratic revolutionary policy and tactics. The resolution adopted by the Congress rejected the demands of the revisionists, but failed to criticise and expose Bernsteinism. Bernstein's supporters also voted for the resolution. p. 358

[149] *The Stuttgart Congress* of the German Social-Democratic Party held on September 21-26 (October 3-8), 1898, was the first congress to discuss the question of revisionism in the German Social-Democratic Party. A statement from Bernstein (who did not attend) was read to the Congress; it amplified and defended the opportunist views he had previously set forth in a number of articles. There was, however, no unity among his opponents at the Congress. Some (Bebel, Kautsky, and others) called for an ideological struggle and a criticism of Bernstein's errors, but opposed the adoption of organisational measures toward him. The others, led by Rosa Luxemburg—the minority—urged a more vigorous struggle against Bernsteinism. p. 359

[150] *Starover* (Old Believer)—the pseudonym of A. N. Potresov, a member of the *Iskra* Editorial Board, he subsequently became a Menshevik. p. 360

[151] "*The Author Who Got a Swelled Head*"—the title of one of Maxim Gorky's early stories. p. 361

[152] The reference is to the collection *Material for a Characterisation of Our Economic Development*, printed legally in an edition of 2,000 copies in April 1895. The collection included Lenin's article (signed *K. Tulin*) "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book (*The Reflection of Marxism in Bourgeois Literature*)", directed against the "legal Marxists" (see present edition, Vol. 1, pp. 333-507). p. 362

[153] "*A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats*" was written by Lenin in 1899, in exile. It was a reply to the *Credo* of a group of "Econo-

mists" (S. N. Prokopovich, Y. D. Kuskova, and others, who subsequently became Cadets). On receiving a copy of the *Credo* from his sister, A. I. Yelizarova, Lenin wrote a sharp protest in which he exposed the real nature of the declaration.

The Protest was discussed and unanimously endorsed by a meeting of 17 exiled Marxists convened by Lenin in the village of Yermakovskoye, Minusinsk District (Siberia). Exiles in Turukhansk District (Siberia) and Orlovo (Vyatka Gubernia) subsequently associated themselves with the Protest.

Lenin forwarded a copy of the Protest abroad to the Emancipation of Labour group; Plekhanov published it in his *Vademecum* (*Handbook—Ed.*) *for the Editors of Rabocheye Dyelo*. p. 364

[154] *Byloye* (*The Past*)—a monthly journal on historical problems published in St. Petersburg in 1906-07; in 1908 it changed its name to *Minuvshiye Gody* (*Years Past*). It was banned by the tsarist government in 1908, but resumed publication in Petrograd in July 1917 and continued in existence until 1926. p. 364

[155] *Vademecum for the Editors of Rabocheye Dyelo*—a collection of articles and documents compiled and prefaced by G. V. Plekhanov and published by the Emancipation of Labour Group in Geneva in 1900; it exposed the opportunist views of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad and of the Editorial Board of its periodical, *Rabocheye Dyelo*. p. 364

[156] *Profession de foi*—a manifesto setting forth the opportunist views of the Kiev Committee, issued at the end of 1899. It was identical with the "Economist" *Credo* on many points. Lenin criticised the document in his article "Apropos of the *Profession de foi*" (see present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 286-96). p. 364

[157] See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1958, p. 16. p. 369

[158] *The Gotha Programme*—the programme adopted by the German Social-Democratic Party at the Gotha Congress in 1875 when the Eisenachers and Lassalleans united. The programme suffered from eclecticism and opportunism, since the Eisenachers made concessions to the Lassalleans on the most important points and accepted their formulations. Marx and Engels subjected the Gotha Programme to scathing criticism and characterised it as a retrograde step as compared with the Eisenach Programme of 1869 (See Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow, 1958, pp. 13-48). p. 369

[159] See Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, pp. 652-54. p. 372

[160] The pamphlet *On Agitation* was written by A. Kremer (later an organiser of the Bund) and edited by Y. O. Tsederbaum (Martov) in Vilno in 1894; it was at first circulated in handwritten and hectographed copies, but at the end of 1897 it was printed in Geneva and supplied with a preface and a concluding piece by P. B. Axelrod. The pamphlet summarised the experiences gained in Social-Democratic work in Vilno and exerted a great influence on Russian Social-Democrats, since it called on them to reject narrow study-circle propaganda and to go over to mass agitation among the workers on issues of their everyday needs and demands. It exaggerated the role of the purely economic struggle, however, to the detriment of political agitation on issues of general democratic demands, and was the embryo of the future "Economism". P. B. Axelrod noted the one-sidedness of the "Vilno Economism" in his concluding piece to the Geneva edition, G. V. Plekhanov made a critical analysis of the pamphlet *On Agitation* in his *Once More on Socialism and the Political Struggle*. p. 376

[161] *Russkaya Starina* (*The Russian Antiquary*)—a monthly magazine dealing with historical problems published in St. Petersburg from 1870 to 1918. p. 376

[162] *S. Peterburgsky Rabochy Listok* (*St. Petersburg Workers' Paper*)—an illegal newspaper, organ of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class. Two issues appeared: No. 1 in February 1897 (dated January and mimeographed in Russia in an edition of 300-400 copies) and No. 2 in September 1897 in Geneva. p. 377

[163] *A private meeting* referred to here was held in St. Petersburg between February 14 and 17 (February 26 and March 1), 1897. It was attended by V. I. Lenin, A. A. Vaneyev, G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, and other members of the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class, that is, by the "veterans" who had been released from prison for three days before being sent into exile to Siberia, as well as by the "young" leaders of the League of Struggle who had taken over the leadership of the League after Lenin's arrest in December 1895. p. 378

[164] "*Listok*" *Rabotnika* (*The Workingman's Paper*)—published in Geneva by the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad from 1896 to 1899; altogether there appeared 10 issues. Issues 1-8 were edited by the Emancipation of Labour group. But after the majority of the Union Abroad went over to "Economism", the Emancipation of Labour group refused to continue editing the paper. Nos. 9 and 10 were issued by a new editorial board set up by the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad. p. 379

[165] The "*article by V. I.*"—an article by V. P. Ivanshin. p. 380

[166] *V. V.*— pseudonym of V. P. Vorontsov, an ideologist of liberal Narodism in the eighties and nineties of the nineteenth century. By the "*V. V.'s of Russian Social-Democracy*" Lenin understands the "Economists" who represented the opportunist trend in the Russian Social-Democratic movement. p. 381

[167] *The Hirsch-Duncker Unions* were established in Germany in 1868 by Hirsch and Duncker, two bourgeois liberals. They preached the "harmony of class interests", drew the workers away from the revolutionary class struggle against the bourgeoisie, and restricted the role of the trade unions to that of mutual benefit societies and educational bodies. p. 385

[168] *The Self-Emancipation of the Workers Group*—a small group of "Economists" formed in St. Petersburg in the autumn of 1898; it existed for only a few months and published a manifesto setting forth its aims [published in *Nakanune* (*On the Eve*) in London], a set of rules and several leaflets addressed to the workers. p. 387

[169] *Nakanune* (*On the Eve*)—a journal expressing Narodnik views. It was published in Russian in London from January 1899 to February 1902—altogether 37 issues. The journal was a rallying point for representatives of various petty-bourgeois parties. p. 388

[170] G. V. Plekhanov published his well-known work *The Development of the Monist View of History* legally in St. Petersburg in 1895 under the pseudonym of *N. Beltov*. p. 394

[171] *Nartsis Tuporylov* (*Narcissus Blunt-Snout*) was the pseudonym under which Y. O. Martov published his satirical poem "Hymn of the Contemporary Russian Socialist" in *Zarya*, No. I, April 1901. The "Hymn" ridiculed the "Economists" and their adaptations to spontaneous events. p. 395

[172] The letter in *Iskra*, No. 7 (August 1901), was from a weaver. It was published in the section "Workers' Movement and Letters from the Factories". The letter testified to the great influence of Lenin's *Iskra* among the advanced workers.

The letter reads in part:

"... I showed *Iskra* to many fellow-workers and the copy was read to tatters; but we treasure it.... *Iskra* writes about our cause, about the All-Russian cause which cannot be evaluated in kopeks or measured in hours, when you read the paper you understand why the gendarmes and the police are afraid of us workers and of the intellectuals whom we follow. It is a fact that they are a threat, not only to the bosses' pockets, but to the tsar, the employers, and all the rest.... It will not take much now to set the working people aflame. All that is wanted is a spark, and the fire will break out. How true are the words 'The Spark will kindle a flame!' (The motto of *Iskra*.—*Ed*.) In the past every strike was an important

event, but today everyone sees that strikes alone are not enough and that we must now fight for freedom, gain it through struggle. Today everyone, old and young, is eager to read but the sad thing is that there are no books. Last Sunday I gathered eleven people and read to them 'Where To Begin'. We discussed it until late in the evening. How well it expressed everything, how it gets to the very heart of things.... And we would like to write a letter to your *Iskra* and ask you to teach us, not only how to begin, but how to live and how to die." p. 431

[173] *Rossiya* (*Russia*)—a moderate liberal newspaper published in St. Petersburg from 1899 to 1902. p. 436

[174] *S. Peterburgskiye Vedomosti* (*St. Petersburg Recorder*)—a newspaper that began publication in St. Petersburg in 1728 as a continuation of the first Russian newspaper *Vedomosti*, founded in 1703. From 1728 to 1874 the *S. Peterburgskiye Vedomosti* was published by the Academy of Sciences and from 1875 onwards by the Ministry of Education; it continued publication until the end of 1917. p. 438

[175] *L. Brentano*—a German bourgeois economist, a champion of so-called "state socialism", who tried to prove the possibility of achieving social equality within the framework of capitalism by reforms and through the reconciliation of the interests of the capitalists and of the workers. Using Marxist phraseology as a cover, Brentano and his followers tried to subordinate the working-class movement to the interests of the bourgeoisie. p. 438

[176] The full name of this small organisation was *Workers' Group for the Struggle Against Capital*, its views were close to those of the "Economists". The group was formed in St. Petersburg in the spring of 1899, it prepared a mimeographed leaflet, "Our Programme", which was never circulated, owing to the arrest of the group. p. 444

[177] *N. N.*—pseudonym of S. N. Prokopovich, an active "Economist" who later became a Cadet. p. 450

[178] *Vasilyev, N. V.*—Colonel of the Gendarmes, supporter of the Zubatov "police socialism". (See Note 128.)

Ozerou, I. Kh. and Worms, A. E.—professors at Moscow University, spokesmen for the "police socialism" of Zubatov. p. 455

[179] *Afanasy Ivanovich and Pulkheria Ivanovna*—a patriarchal family of petty provincial landlords in Gogol's *Old-Time Landowners*. p. 456

[180] Lenin refers here to his own revolutionary activity in St. Petersburg in 1893-95. p. 466

[181] The reference is to the pamphlet *Report on the Russian Social-Democratic Movement to the International Socialist Congress in Paris, 1900*. The Report was submitted to the Congress by the Editorial Board of *Rabocheye Dyelo* on behalf of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad and was published as a separate pamphlet in Geneva in 1901; the pamphlet also contained the report of the Bund ("The History of the Jewish Working-Class Movement in Russia and Poland"). p. 483

[182] *Yuzhny Rabochy* (*The Southern Worker*)—a Social-Democratic newspaper, illegally published from January 1900 to April 1903 by a group of that name; twelve issues appeared. p. 488

[183] Lenin added this footnote for purposes of secrecy. The facts are enumerated in the order in which they actually took place. p. 496

[184] The reference is to the negotiations between the St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class and Lenin who, in the second half of 1897, wrote the two pamphlets mentioned. p. 496

[185] The reference is to the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad. (See Note 103.) p. 496

[186] The reference is to the negotiations between Lenin and the Central Committee of the Bund. p. 497

[187] *The "fourth fact"* of which Lenin speaks was the attempt of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad and the Bund to convene the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in the spring of 1900. The "*member of the committee*" referred to was I. H. Lalayants (a member of the Ekaterinoslav Social-Democratic Committee) who came to Moscow in February 1900 for talks with Lenin. p. 497

[188] Lenin cites the article by D. I. Pisarev "Blunders of Immature Thinking". p. 510

[189] *Tkachov, P. N.* (1844-1885)—one of the ideologists of revolutionary Narodism, a follower of the Auguste Blanqui. p. 510

[190] Lenin refers to the following passage from Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: "Hegel remarks somewhere that all facts and personages of great importance in world history occur, as it were, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce" (see Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1958, p. 247). p. 510

[191] *Janizaries*—privileged Turkish infantry, abolished in 1826. The janizaries plundered the population and were known for their unusual brutality. Lenin called the tsarist police "janizaries". p. 514

[192] Lenin omitted this appendix when *What Is To Be Done?* was republished in the collection *Twelve Years* in 1907 p. 521

[193] *The International Socialist Bureau*—the executive body of the Second International established by decision of the Paris Congress in 1900. From 1905 onwards Lenin was a member of the Bureau as a representative of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. p. 521

[194] *Iskra*, No. 18 (March 10, 1902) published in the section "From the Party" an item entitled "*Zarya*'s Polemic with *Vorwärts*", summing up the controversy. p. 526

THE LIFE AND WORK OF V. I. LENIN

Chronology

(May 1901-February 1902)

1901

May, prior to 13 (26)	Lenin begins work on his book *What Is To Be Done?*
May 13-15 (20-28)	Lenin's "Where To Begin" is published in *Iskra*, No. 4; in this article Lenin outlined a concrete plan for the building of a revolutionary party of the working class, which was later developed in *What Is To Be Done?*
May-June	Lenin guides the organising of the transport of *Iskra* to Russia. Lenin conducts negotiations with the *Iskra* group in Baku for reprinting *Iskra* in the local underground print-shop organised by V. Z. Ketskhoveli. In letters to *Iskra* agents Lenin gives instructions on the reprinting of material published in the newspaper at the *Iskra* underground press in Kishinev.
June, prior to 24 (beginning of July)	Lenin writes his "Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism".
June 24 and 26 (July 7 and 9)	Lenin poses to the *Iskra* editors the question of drafting a Party programme.
June 24-July 17 (July 7-30)	The discussion on Lenin's article "Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism" by the *Iskra* editors reveals differences between Lenin and Plekhanov on the question of the attitude to the liberals. Lenin refuses to change the general tone of the article or to revise his position of principle on the question of the attitude to the liberals.
June	Lenin's article "Another Massacre", on the workers' defence at the Obukhov Works, published in *Iskra*, No. 5.

June-September — Lenin writes "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'", directed against the revisionist "Critics" of the Marxist theory of the agrarian question.

July — In a letter to an *Iskra* adherent Lenin protests emphatically against the publication, in St. Petersburg, of a local periodical of the Russian *Iskra* organisation, believing that plan to be a return to amateur methods of work.
Lenin's article "A Valuable Admission" published in *Iskra*, No. 6 .

July 31-August 12 (*August 13-25*) — Lenin receives from Russia N. K. Krupskaya's first pamphlet, The Woman Worker, printed in the *Iskra* underground press at Kishinev.

August — Lenin's article "The Lessons of the Crisis" published in *Iskra*, No. 7.

Lenin sends to *Iskra* agents in Russia the plan he has elaborated for an All-Russian *Iskra* organisation.

September 10 (*23*) — Lenin's article "The Serf-Owners at Work" published in *Iskra*, No. 8.

September 20 (*October 3*) — Lenin participates in a conference of representatives of *Iskra* and *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisations abroad held in Zurich. The conference instructs Lenin to speak at the "Unity" Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. organisations abroad.

September 21 (*October 4*) — Lenin speaks at the "Unity" Conference of *Iskra* and *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisations, the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, the Bund, and the Borba group, and exposes the opportunism of the leaders of the Union Abroad.

September 22 (*October 5*) — After reading a declaration on the final rupture with the Union Abroad, Lenin and the representatives of *Iskra* and *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisations abroad leave the "Unity" Conference.

Late September-early October (*October*) — Lenin negotiates with an *Iskra* agent from Russia and gives instructions on the formation of an All-Russian *Iskra* organisation.

Lenin participates in the organisation—undertaken on his initiative—of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad, which united the adherents of *Iskra* and the *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation.

October	Lenin's articles "Fighting the Famine-Stricken" "A Reply to the St. Petersburg Committee", and "Party Affairs Abroad" published in *Iskra*, No. 9.
November, prior to 20 (*December, prior to 3*)	Lenin's article "Penal Servitude Regulations and Penal Servitude Sentences" published in *Iskra*, No. 10.
November 20 (*December 3*)	Lenin's article "The Protest of the Finnish People" published in *Iskra*, No. 11.
December, prior to 5 (*18*)	In a letter to the *Iskra* organisations in Russia Lenin presents the information that *What Is To Be Done?* will shortly be published.
December 5 (*18*)	In a letter to an *Iskra* agent Lenin objects strongly to the use of the *Iskra* press at Kishinev for printing writings of an "Economist" tendency.
December, prior to 6 (*19*)	In the name of the *Iskra* Editorial Board Lenin writes a letter of congratulation to G. V. Plekhanov on the anniversary of his twenty-five years of revolutionary activity.
December 6 (*19*)	Lenin's article "A Talk with Defenders of Economism" published in *Iskra*, No. 12.
December, between 6 and 10 (*19 and 23*)	*Zarya*, No. 2-3 publishes Lenin's "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", the first four chapters of his work "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" under the title "The 'Critics' on the Agrarian Question" (the first article signed *N. Lenin*), and "Review of Home Affairs".
December 20 (*January 2, 1902*)	Lenin's article "Demonstrations Have Begun" published in *Iskra*, No. 13.
December 21 (*January 3 1902*)	Lenin receives the first copy of *Iskra*, No. 10, printed at the *Iskra* underground press in Kishinev.

1902

Early January (*mid-January*)	Lenin writes critical notes to the first draft programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, composed by Plekhanov.
January 8 (21)	Lenin, in a speech at a conference of the *Iskra* Editorial Board in Munich criticises the first draft programme composed by Plekhanov and introduces his corrections and proposals.

January (between 8 and 25) (between January 21 and February 7)	Lenin composes a new draft programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.
January 15 (28)	Lenin's article "Concerning the State Budget" published in *Iskra*, No. 15.
End of January (first half of February)	Following Lenin's instructions, the All-Russian *Iskra* organisation is founded at a conference of *Iskra* adherents in Samara.
February 1 (14)	Lenin's article "Political Agitation and 'The Class Point of View'" published in *Iskra*, No. 16.
February	Lenin writes the Preface to his *What Is To Be Done?*
End of February to mid-March (March)	Lenin writes the critical notes to the second draft programme of the R.S.D.L.P. composed by Plekhanov.
March 5 (18)	Lenin writes for the Belostok Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. the "Report of the *Iskra* Editorial Board to the Meeting of R.S.D.L.P. Committees" and a draft resolution; he takes part in the conference of the *Iskra* Editorial Board and gives instructions to the *Iskra* delegate to the Belostok Conference.
Beginning of March (mid-March)	The book *What Is To Be Done? Burning Questions of Our Movement* is published in Stuttgart; in this work Lenin elaborated the ideological foundations of the Marxist Party.

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

В. И. ЛЕНИН
СОЧИНЕНИЯ

Том 5

На английском языке